Atma Siddhi Shastra
of
Shrimad Rajchandra

FORWARD

In modern times, Shrimad Räjchandra (Räychandbhäi) has taught the path of self-realization to the aspirants, who had strayed from the true path of Lord Mahävir, in a simple language. He had attained the self-realization and his living was saintly without any attachment for a position, wealth, fame, and even his body. He was friendly to all. In 142 stanzas of the "Ätmasiddhi" he has taught the pathway to self-realization, the true meaning of life.

Mahätmä Gändhi was greatly influenced by Shrimad. His teachings had helped Gändhi to develop the non-violent way of life and the non-violent freedom struggle for India. In his autobiography, Gändhiji writes, "No one else has ever made on me the impression that Räychandbhäi did". His pathway of true happiness is a boon to the spiritual aspirants in the 21st century where religion and faith could play major pacifying roles in many of today's conflicts in the world.

I have known shri Manubhai Doshi of Chicago for quite sometime. He is well-read and was a teacher in Jain Pathshala in Chicago for many years. He is active in Jain Society of Metropolitan Chicago. He is the editor of fine publication "Jain Darshan". Shri Manubhai has translated many prose and poems into English for the benefit of young Jains and new generation. Being a teacher and professional, he is meticulous and well organized.

It is indeed gratifying that Manubhai has written this English version with short commentary on Ätmasiddhi by Shrimad Räjchandra. Before embarking on this project, he has carefully researched the related past work and included the essence of it with due credit and references. He has studied Vachanämrutji (the collection of spiritual letters by Shrimad Räjchandra, about 1000 page volume) very well and has provided plenty of references and quotes to elucidate the profound spiritual wisdom behind the simple-looking stanzas of Ätmasiddhi.

Manubhai has organized the book in a way that can be used by beginners, scholars, Jains and non-Jains alike. For each stanza, he has provided original stanza in Gujarati, followed by English transliteration, English translation and his commentary in terms of explanation & discussion. English translation in verse by Pujya Brahmachäriji is included in Appendix-I for reference and reverence. The Letter of Six Fundamentals in prose, the original basis of this Ätmasiddhi Shästra, is included in Appendix-II. Shri Manubhai has translated it in English. This way he caters to the needs of most readers. Since Manubhai has studied other Darshans (theological schools), he has been able to bring out the deeper meaning and relate it properly. I am sure, it will go a long way in spreading the teachings of Jainism; by Lord Mahavir and his dedicated disciple Shrimad Räjchandraji.

There are six major theological schools in Indian Aryan culture. Each is right in its own way and has something good to offer. Although there is partial truth in each, none is complete. Jainism has synergistically integrated all of them with due respect. The Six Fundamental tenets deal with these six schools and Ätmasiddhi Shästra is representative of the same. In pointing out only partial truth in each school, no denigration or disrespect is intended. The purpose is simply to state impartially that Jainism, and Ätmasiddhi in particular, includes and integrates all the six tenets appropriately. Manubhai has treated this issue very well in stanza 44 and elsewhere.

In everyday worldly dealings, repetition is considered unnecessary, improper and often an insult to intelligence. However, in spiritual realm repetition is considered necessary and a virtue. This is due to the fact that worldly souls are used to worldly matters since time immemorial and for them there is no need to repeat anything. For this reason, in schools and colleges subject matter is straightforward without any repetition. But in spiritual matters the worldly souls are strangers and without aptitude for it. Realizing this, Manubhai has adopted the tradition of some repetition in his English translation and commentary without undue elaboration. The thoughtful readers, especially the young new generation, should not feel either bored or insulted by some necessary repetition.

Manubhai earned the Masters degree in Economics & Political Science from the University of Bombay in 1947. He then worked for Government for 28 years and retired as Assistant Commissioner of Industries. He immigrated to USA in 1980. He has been the Founder Editor of "Jain Darshan" since 1990 and a Regional Editor of "Jain Digest" by North American Jain Federation (JAINA) since 1995. He has written and published six books under titles: Dev Vandan, Essence of Jainism, Samayik, Spiritual Code & Restraints, Jain Stories of Ancient Times and Pilgrimage to Shatrunjay (Palitana). Manubhai is an avid reader of Shrimad Räjchandra's writings. As a result, he has translated in English; Shrimads Chha Padano Patra (Appendix-II), Apoorva Avasar, Bhakti Rahasya (20 Dohara), Amulya Tattva Vichär, some letters and now this Ätmasiddhi. He has also written extensively on Yoga (meditation) and Tattvärtha Sutra. He is very dedicated, healthy, enthusiastic and active even at the age of 83! May he live long healthy life and give us more gems like this. He has three sons and a daughter, all married and settled in USA, with 8 grand children.

I sincerely appreciate this excellent work and congratulate Shri Manubhai for the same. I hope that all readers will benefit from this work; whether they are casual readers, scholars or spiritual aspirants. May Mahavir Swami bless us all!

With best wishes and blessings,

Koba
Mahavir Jayanti — Ätmänandji
15th April, 2003.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Shrimad was a religious philosopher of a very high caliber. Ätmasiddhi Shästra is the cream of his writings. Within its 142 stanzas he has presented the essence of all spiritual sciences. The book has something valuable to offer to every aspirant irrespective of his religious background. Though it deals with the abstract concept of soul, it has become popular and its message has been continually spreading. It has so far remained more or less restricted to Indian community due to the language limitations, but its message needs to be spread far and wide. With that intention I had prepared its English translation together with the commentary.

It was a pleasure that Shri Rajchandra Adhyatmic Sadhana Kendra, Koba decided to publish it and brought out 5000 copies in 2003. With their wide distribution system they could arrange to send the book to various parts of the world, thus fulfilling my dream of spreading its message. Since those 5000 copies have been exhausted by now, I have the reason to think that the publication has been received well.

As the demand for the book continues, it was necessary to reprint it. When SRAS Kendra therefore proposed to bring out the second edition of the book, I welcomed it. While going through the matter for that purpose it was noticed that some parts were not adequately presented and some were not placed in right context. I have therefore revised the matter so as to make it coherent and more accurate. Chapter 3 in particular has been rewritten. Simultaneously I have taken care to rectify the errors that had crept in the previous edition. It is hoped that the readers would find this edition more helpful.

Since the original title seemed to be making a very tall claim, this edition is being published under the simpler title of Räjgeetä.

Lake Forest, U.S. Manu Doshi
December 28 2008

PREFACE

Since I started reciting Ätmasiddhi Shästra during the eighties, I wanted to bring out its English version and prepared its translation. It was, however, noticed that the real significance of the original text could not be brought out within the bare translation. Detailed explanatory notes were necessary. So I started to prepare them. But the more I recited the text, the more I noticed that the notes were far from satisfactory. Therefore, I decided to wait, until I could gain a better comprehension of the text.

The Institute of Jainology (London) wrote me a letter in 1998 suggesting that if I prepare the translation with explanatory notes, it will publish the same on the occasion of the first centenary of Shrimad's passing away. That prompted me to start writing. The work was accordingly completed by the end of 1999. But the Institute later on decided not to publish the same. However, it gets the credit of prompting me to write, since I would not have perhaps embarked upon the project in absence of their suggestion.

Meanwhile I was keeping in touch with Shrimad Räjchandra Ädhyätmik Sädhnä Kendra, Kobä in order to get a `Forward' from the revered Ätmänandji. He responded favorably and agreed to write the Forward, which appears in this book. Encouraged by his response, I tried to figure out whether his Organization would like to publish my work. I am happy that they agreed and the book sees the light of the day.

In writing these notes, I have tried to bring out what is implicit in the great work, particularly taking care that the translation remains true to the original text. To be sure, I presented my translation to Dr. Räkeshbhäi Zaveri of Mumbai (Bombay) and I feel gratified that he has appreciated the same.

Some sanctity is attached to the number 18 in Indian tradition. There are 18 Parva in Mahäbhärat, 18 armies were involved in that war, the war lasted for 18 days, Geetä has 18 Adhyäys (chapters), there are 18 Puräns and 18 Abhisheks are performed on the occasion of Pratishthä. Ätmasiddhi Shästra also can be divided into 18 parts comprising, the background, characteristics of the sectarian, those of the truth seekers, Statement of Six Fundamentals, 6 types of pupil's questions, 6 replies thereto, the pupil's self-realization and the conclusion. In this book I have dealt with these 18 parts in 18 chapters. On the analogy of 18 Adhyäys of Geetä, these 18 chapters of Ätmasiddhi Shästra can be termed as Adhyätma Geetä.

In Vedic tradition, Upanishads are the source of high spiritual wealth. Upanishad literally means the spiritual science that can be learnt by sitting at the feet of a preceptor and that exactly applies to Ätmasiddhi. If one wants to grasp the inner significance of Ätmasiddhi Shästra, it needs to be studied as such. It can therefore be termed as an Upanishad. Since it mainly deals with the soul, it can be called Ätma Upanishad or Ätmopanishad. Many non-Jains have adopted it as such and have been reciting the same regularly.

The presentation in the book has been made in the following order. Every stanza of the original text is first given in Gujarati script followed by English transliteration. Thereafter my translation is given, followed by the explanatory notes and discussion. At the end, there are two appendices. The first contains the versified translation of Ätmasiddhi Shästra prepared by revered Brahmachäriji under the title 'Self-

Realization'. The second contains my English version of the Letter of Six Fundamentals by Shrimad and addressed to reverend Laghuräjswämi. It is hoped that this plan will make the book more helpful, effective and acceptable.

I have much respect for revered Brahmachäriji. His writings have helped me in better understanding the writings of Shrimad, and in preparing these notes. Moreover, the sermons of Mahäsati Tarulatäji also have been very helpful. Therefore I express my gratitude to her. I also mention Shri Mahendra Khandhär and Dr. Chandrakänt Shäh, who were kind enough to go through the entire matter. The former has gone through the same very minutely and has made several valuable suggestions for improving the same. Thereafter he continued to take active interest in the matter and made every possible effort to see that this book is published.

April 14, 2003 Manu Doshi

PROLOGUE

Shrimad was Self-realized and is known as a spiritual philosopher of very high caliber. He was born with a high level of Kshayopasham, which means that he had very few deluding and obscuring Karmas. Consequently he was able to gain the knowledge of his previous births at the tender age of seven.

He had very sharp memory and he could recollect whatever he read or otherwise came across. He became known for his mnemonic capability during his teens. That capacity continued to increase and at the age of 19 he displayed the extraordinary feat of remaining mindful of 100 activities simultaneously. Thereby he came to be known as Shatävadhäni. Even the British rulers of that time were highly impressed by his performance and offered to make necessary arrangements for him, if he were willing to go to Europe for displaying his talent. He, however, declined that offer, because he felt that he would not be able to live in Europe according to his religious standards. He also realized that the worldly accomplishments, like performing mnemonic feat and astrlogy were not helpful in spiritual pursuit and therefore he gave them up soon after the above performance.

Shrimad gained right perception at the age of 23 and since then he mainly stayed tuned to spiritual awakening despite being occupied in jewelry business. His moral character was very high. His regard for truth, adherence to high moral values in the business and firmness to do what he saw right, inspired those who came in contact with him. Mahätmä Gändhi was highly impressed by his spiritual level and accepted him as his spiritual guide. When Gändhiji was in South Africa, he came under pressure from his Christian and Muslim friends to adopt their faith. At that time he sought the guidance from Shrimad. That guidance showed to him that he could reach the highest level of spiritual elevation by continuing in his own faith and he need not change his religion. He has reverently written about Shrimad in his autobiography and has paid glorious tributes to him on several other occasions.

A high level of enlightenment is evident in the writings of Shrimad. Its significance may not be clear to a casual reader. However, if one dwells deep into it, he would notice that the writings contain rare jewels of spiritual wealth. Ätmasiddhi Shästra is the prime jewel of his writings. Revered Ambälälbhäi, revered Saubhägyabhäi and Reverend Laghuräjswämi were instrumental in bringing it out of his heart. All those three happened to come in contact with Shrimad in 1890. They were lucky enough to notice that Shrimad was self-realized and made out that their spiritual well being was in surrendering to him. Thereby they gained right perception during the lifetime of Shrimad. About half of the letters in Vachanämrut (Compilation of Shrimad's writings) have been addressed to them; 245 to Saubhägyabhäi, 126 to Ambälälbhäi and 92 to Laghuräjswämi. It is therefore pertinent to say a few words about them.

Ambälälbhäi was the first to come in contact with Shrimad. He was a native of Khambhät and was two years younger than Shrimad. Once he had been to Ahmedäbäd to attend a wedding. There he happened to come in contact with Juthäbhäi, who knew Shrimad as the self-realized person. Ambälälbhäi was impressed by the letters that Shrimad had written to Juthäbhäi and wished to contact him. That wish materialized in 1890, when Shrimad came to Khambhät. Ambälälbhäi's esteem for him increased by that contact and from that time he remained a lifelong devotee of Shrimad. He was

very intelligent and easily understood what Shrimad had to convey. Shrimad has written to Laghuräjswämi on several occasions that Ambäläl would understand his letters better. The brief explanatory notes on Ätmasiddhi Shästra, prepared by him and reviewed by Shrimad, are published in Vachanämrut (# 718) below the text of Ätmasiddhi. He died at an early age of 37.

Saubhägyabhäi was a native of Säylä in Sauräshtra (Gujarät) and was 44 years older than Shrimad. In 1890 when he came to know about Shrimad's exceptional capabilities, he got inclined to show him a secret Mantra, which was termed as Seed of Enlightenment. When, however, he met Shrimad, he noticed that Shrimad was already enlightened.

By virtue of his clairvoyance Shrimad could make out why Saubhägyabhäi had come. From that time Saubhägyabhäi accepted Shrimad as his Guru and remained totally faithful to him till the end of his life. During that period of seven years, he addressed to Shrimad whatever ideas and questions occurred to him and elicited enlightening replies. Shrimad also was pleased to notice in him a real truth-seeker and wrote to him many letters on his own indicating the inner state of his mind. Saubhägyabhäi's death in 1897 was a great loss to Shrimad. While writing eulogy over his death Shrimad has observed (Vachanämrut # 782) as under.

"It is no doubt that while leaving the body Shri Sobhäg gained unprecedented well being by maintaining the state of self consciousness with unwavering detachment, which is very hard even for great ascetics. ... We repeatedly feel that it would be rare, in this part of the world at this time, to come across a man like Shri Sobhäg. ... No liberation seeker should ever forget Shri Sobhäg. ... His straightforwardness, firm determination about the ultimate objective, benevolence towards the truth-seekers and other qualities are worth reflecting again and again."

Laghuräjswämi was a Sthänakwäsi Jain monk known as Lalluji. He was 14 years older than Shrimad. During 1890 while he was in Khambhät, a doubt arose in his mind about a precept of Bhagavatisutra. At that time Ambälälbhäi was talking with his colleagues about the letters from Shrimad. Laghuräswämi called him and mentioned about his doubt. Ambälälbhäi said that Shrimad was very knowledgeable and could give satisfactory replies to all such questions. He showed the letters from Shrimad that he had brought from Juthäbhäi. Laghuräjswämi was impressed by their contents and decided to contact Shrimad. The personal contact thereafter led him to accept Shrimad as his Guru. He survived Shrimad by 35 years and had the opportunity to spread the message of Shrimad. He founded the well-known Shrimad Räjchandra Äshram located at Agäs, about 60 miles south of Ahmedäbäd in Gujarät State (India).

Durin 1894 when Laghuräjswämi was in Surat, he was suffering from fever for about a year. At that time, one Lallubhäi Zaveri died after prolonged illness. Thereupon Laghuräjswämi felt that if he also met the same fate, his life would end without gaining right perception. In that case he would have to continue the infinite wandering in the cycle of birth and death. He therefore wrote to Shrimad to send him something that could help gain right perception.

Thereupon Shrimad wrote to him the Letter of Six Fundamentals, which is given in the Appendix II. Laghuräjswämi was very pleased to receive it and went through it repeatedly. That Letter was sent to Saubhägyabhäi in 1895. He also liked it very much and used to ponder over it again and again. He wanted to commit it to memory. But

the letter being in prose he found it hard to memorize. So he requested Shrimad to bring out something similar in poetical version.

Shrimad was inherently compassionate. Moreover, he had a special regard for Saubhägyabhäi, who had been instrumental in bringing out, in the form of letters, what lay at his heart. Therefore in late 1896 when Shrimad was in Nadiäd, one auspicious evening after returning from a walk, he called Ambälälbhäi and asked him to hold a lamp. While Ambälälbhäi held it as directed, Shrimad started writing and within an hour and a half he wrote 142 stanzas of Ätmasiddhi Shästra. Mere copying of those stanzas would take longer time! The fact, that Shrimad brought out that great work in that short time, would give some idea of the spiritual wealth abiding within him.

Initially only four copies of Ätmasiddhi Shästra were made; one for Saubhägyabhäi, one for Ambälälbhäi, one for Laghuräjswämi and one for Mänekläl Gheläbhäi Zaveri. Saubhägyabhäi was much elated to get it. He was highly impressed by its contents and committed it to memory. He has written, "Ätmasiddhi is the essence of 14 Poorva. Gosaliä (Dungarshi Gosaliä, who also had become a follower of Shrimad) and I regularly read it and enjoy it very much. ... After reading it, one is not inclined to read anything else. ... It would have been hard for this body to survive, if you (Shrimad) had not sent Ätmasiddhi. I get delight in reading it and thereby I am able to survive. After reading Ätmasiddhi nothing remains to be asked. Everything becomes clear."

Laghuräjswämi also was very pleased to get Ätmasiddhi Shästra. Since he was asked to read it alone, he used to go out of the residential area and read it in wilderness. He has written, "By reading it and by reciting some of its stanzas my soul was elated. I felt that there is unique significance in every line of it. The regular study of Ätmasiddhi Shästra and its contemplation led to internal peace. It stayed in my mind while talking with any one or while undertaking any other activity." He noted that its reading was helpful to every spiritual aspirant and after setting up Räjchandra Äshram at Agäs, he made its reciting a regular feature for the resident-aspirants.

The subject matter of Ätmasiddhi is soul and it deals with soul's existence, everlastingness, acquisition of Karma, bearing the consequences, liberation therefrom and the way of attaining liberation. The subject has been carefully and adequately presented. Nothing worth has been left out. Every stanza is full of significance and some of them are the most precious jewels of spiritual realm. By composing Ätmasiddhi Shrimad has virtually contained the sea of spiritual science within the bowl of the book. If one wants to realize the Self, studying that text and putting its precepts into practice would suffice; one would not need to look for any other source.

The known religious philosophies can be grouped in six ideologies known as Shaddarshan, which used to form a part of the scholastic curriculum in India. Ätmasiddhi Shästra is the gist thereof; it is the essence of all spiritual sciences. The religious philosophies generally contain intricate terms and their technicalities are hard to understand. But Ätmasiddhi Shästra is presented in easy to understand language. Even a layman can make out its basic concepts. Moreover, except for a few terms it contains no terminology that can be considered exclusively Jain. That makes it acceptable to people of all faiths. In that connection Revered Brahmachäriji has observed as under.

"This unparalleled composition of Shrimad is versified. It is the duty of discerning reader to calmly elaborate it. Shrimad himself has stated that 100 stanzas can be written on each of its 142 stanzas. It is such a great composition. But it is presented in

a style whereby every one can gain something that he is worthy of; the deeper one goes into it, the more evident would be its significance.

"To present the stupendous aspects of the religious philosophy in such a simple language is the function of highly enlightened. The pattern of Ätmasiddhi differs from other writings of Shrimad. This work, composed in short and simple words, devoid of logical concepts and inferences or of the complicating proofs and disproofs and filled with the beneficial matter of use to every one from child to the aged, has become very popular."

The importance of this text has been shown by revered Brahmachäriji in the following verse.

Patit Jan Pävani, Sur Saritä Sami, Adham Uddhärini Ätmasiddhi; Janma Janmäntaro Jänatä Jogie, Ätma Anubhav Vade Äj Didhi. Bhakta Bhagirath Samä, Bhägyashäli Mahä, Bhavya Saubhägyani Vinatithi; Chäruttar Bhuminä, Nagar Nadiädamän, Poorna Krupä Prabhue Kari Ti.

The first line states that Ätmasiddhi Shästra purifies the down-trodden like the heavenly river Gangä and it uplifts even those, who have fallen to the lowest level. The second line states that the composition has been brought out of Self-experience of the great ascetic, who knew many of his previous lives. Since it was brought out at the request of Saubhägyabhäi, he has been compared in the third line with king Bhagirath, who brought down the holy Gangä. The remaining part of the third line and the last line state that Shrimad has extended the utmost favor by composing it at Nadiäd in the region of Charotar.

With this background, let us recite the blissful Navkär Mantra and other Mängliks so as to go ahead with this work without encountering any difficulty.

Namo Arihantänam
(Obeisance to the omniscient Lords)
Namo Siddhänam
(Obeisance to the liberated souls)
Namo Äyariyänam
(Obeisance to the heads of religious order)
Namo Uvazzäyänam
(Obeisance to the masters of scriptures)
Namo Loe Savva Sähoonam
(Obeisance to all the monks in the universe)

Eso Panch Namokkäro, Savva Pävappanäsano,
Mangalänam Cha Savvesim, Padhamam Havai Mangalam.

(This fivefold obeisance is the eradicator of all sins and is the foremost among all blissful aspects)
Sahajätma Swarup Paramguru.
(Abiding at ease in the Self is characteristic of the Supreme Guru.)

Mahä Divyähä Kukshiratnam, Shabdajit Ravätmajam;
Räjachandramaham Vande, Tattvalochan Däyakam.

[I bow to Shrimad Räjchandra, the master of words, the jewel born of the womb of mother Devbai (great divinity), the son of Ravajibhäi and bestower of spiritual eyesight]

Ajnän Timirändhänäm, Jnänänjan Shaläkayä;
Chakshurunmilitam Yena, Tasmai Shri Gurave Namah.

(I bow to the graceful Guru, who opened with the anointing stick of enlightenment, my eyes blinded by the darkness of ignorance).

Chapter 1: Introduction

There are 23 stanzas in this introductory chapter. Shrimad gives therein the vital factors of the composition like Mänglik, its purpose, characteristics of lifeless ritualists and of bare knowledgeable, importance of Guru in spiritual pursuit, characteristics of true Guru and guidance for the aspirants in absence of a Guru.

Je Swarup Samajyä Vinä, Pämyo Dukh Anant;
***Samajävyun Te Pad Namun, Shri Sadguru Bhagavant*.**

In absence of understanding the true nature of soul, I experienced endless suffering.
I bow to the graceful Guru, who explained the true nature of soul. (1)

Explanation & Discussion:

In Äryan tradition, a spiritual composition usually begins with presentation of four aspects: (1) **Mänglik:** prayer for blessings, (2) **Sambandh:** the context or the relation in which the composition is presented, (3) **Abhidheya:** the subject matter of the composition, and (4) **Prayojan:** the purpose of the composition. The first two are covered in this stanza. Mängalik consists in the form of paying homage to the graceful Guru and Sambandh in the form of Guru explaining to pupil. The remaining two aspects are left to the next stanza.

Since the time immemorial the worldly soul has been going through the cycle of birth and death. Its intention is to gain happiness, but actually it ends up in suffering. In spite of trying hard to mitigate that suffering, the soul fails in doing so, because it does not make out the true cause of suffering. Delusion, the real cause of suffering, prevents it from understanding its true nature and deprives it of its inherent happiness. By virtue of the delusion the soul identifies itself with the body and treats the comforts and discomforts of the body as its own. This is the root cause of its misery, wandering from birth to birth and suffering from old age, disease, death, etc. This stanza thus specifies the root cause of suffering.

That suffering cannot end, unless the soul realizes its true, blissful nature. That realization can come forth by securing guidance from a true Guru who has realized the soul. One, who has not realized it, cannot explain its true nature. Here explaining does not mean clarifying the terms, as it is done in the schools. That type of explanation, the worldly soul might have got on innumerable occasions during its infinite wandering. At times it might have also got the right explanation, but that has remained at the superficial level and did not reach the depth within. It is not possible to bring the suffering and misery to the end until one understands the true nature of soul and brings it to the experiential level, until he attains self-realization.

Explaining by a self-realized Guru occurs from his soul and is therefore convincing. As such, the pupil is induced to put the same into practice. The genuine efforts in that direction can enable him to understand the true nature of soul. Shrimad has therefore said

(Vachanämrut # 651) that 'understanding means to know and experience the true nature of soul, as it is'. Such understanding changes the entire outlook. When the orientation turns to its true nature, one can stay tuned to it. There is thus enormous importance of an enlightened Guru in spiritual pursuit. It is therefore appropriate that Shrimad starts the work with homage to the graceful Guru, who explained the true nature of the soul.

This stanza can also be interpreted as covering all the six Fundamentals, which form the basis of Ätmasiddhi Shästra. The soul undergoing suffering points to its **existence;** endless suffering signifies that the soul is **everlasting;** undergoing of the suffering in absence of understanding indicates that the soul has been acquiring **Karmas** and has been bearing its **consequences;** true nature of soul indicates the state of **liberation;** and explaining of that nature points to the **means** of attaining the same.

Vartamän Ä Kälamän, Mokshamärga Bahu Lop;
Vichäravä Ätmärthine, Bhäkhyo Atra Agopya.

Currently, the path of liberation has been mostly lost. It is described here for contemplation of truth-seekers without any reservation. (2)

Explanation & Discussion:

The remaining two aspects of the composition are covered here. Path of liberation is Abhidheya (The subject matter of the composition) and contemplation for truth seekers is Prayojan (Purpose of the composition).

The worldly people stay deeply engrossed with material well being in the hope of gaining peace and happiness. We have been pursuing material comforts almost to the exclusion of spiritual objective. With that end in view we have embarked upon scientific exploration, which has provided the comforts and amenities that were unimaginable only a few years back. Has that, however, made us happy?

Shrimad wrote this more than a century before in light of the situation then prevailing. Since then the human race has made tremendous progress in the material field. It has split the atom, probed the psyche, spliced the gene and cloned the animals. It has invented radar, microwave and silicon chip. It has revolutionized the means of transport and communication by inventing automobiles, airplanes, rockets, satellites, telephones, televisions, computers, and internet. It has radically revised the prevalent theories in the areas of logic, learning, physics, chemistry, medicine, mathematics, space and time.

In the spiritual field, however, the mankind has made no progress. On the contrary, there has been evident regress. The material progress has not brought the lasting happiness. The true happiness lies in the state of liberation and the worldly soul needs to look to the path thereof, which it has consistently ignored. As that path has not been traversed since long, it has almost been lost sight of. The situation is thus deplorable.

The everlasting happiness can arise only from within. Shrimad, the enlightened Guru, is going to show that path without any reservation for the truth-seekers. This is being done out of innate compassion.

Koi Kriyäjad Thai Rahyä, Shushka Jnänamän Koi;
Mäne Märag Mokshano, Karunä Upaje Joi.

Some people indulge in lifeless rituals, while some resort to bare knowledge; both of them believe their path to be the path of liberation. I feel sorry to notice it. (3)

Explanation & Discussion:

The path of liberation consists of right perception, right knowledge and right action. Since perception and knowledge go hand in hand, it can also be said that the path consists of knowledge and action. The seers have therefore said: "Jnänkriyäbhyäm Mokshah". It means that liberation can be achieved by the combination of knowledge and action. Knowledge without action is sterile. It leads nowhere and tends to give rise to vanity. On the other hand, action without knowledge leads to a blind alley. One could get entrapped therein.

Most aspirants do not realize the importance of pursuing both those aspects simultaneously. Absence of such understanding is the principal cause of drifting in the sea of birth and death. Some people believe that the performance of auspicious rituals is enough. Thereby they expect to earn Punya (Wholesome Karma), which could lead them to a better life hereafter. Therefore they perform the traditional rituals without understanding their purpose. Such people are called lifeless ritualists.

On the other hand, some people read or listen to the sacred books and scriptures written from the absolute point of view. Thereby they conclude that the understanding of soul and its nature will lead to manifestation of its true nature. Such intellectual understanding does not become helpful in gaining Self-Realization. Mere intellectual understanding leads them astray. Such people are called bare knowledgeable. What is required is the application of knowledge in actual practice. That can translate the knowledge into true understanding.

Both these groups are mistaken. Shrimad observes that majority of the religiously oriented people belong to one of the two groups. They insist upon the truthfulness of their own viewpoint. He feels compassionate that the people are holding such one-sided views. The next two stanzas define the characteristics of the lifeless ritualists and the bare knowledge persons.

Bähya Kriyämän Rächatä, Antarbhed Na Känyi;
Jnän Märga Nishedhatä, Teh Kriyäjad Änyi.

Lifeless ritualists are those, who cherish the external rituals without inner discrimination and reject the path of knowledge. (4)

Explanation & Discussion:

Here Shrimad describes the characteristics of lifeless ritualists. Those, who rely merely upon rituals and cherish in performing them without keeping in view their purpose, are lifeless ritualists. The term ritual connotes religious formality. The activities undertaken by the laymen as their daily routine like going to the temple, performing Poojan, performing Samayik, Pratikraman, etc. become mechanical, because they do not have the true concept for undertaking the same; they are undertaken without understanding their significance and meaning. Most of them have wrong notion about these activities. They remain under the impression that their activities will remove the impact of Karmas and lead them to liberation.

It should be noted that rituals are not to be rejected. They are meant to benefit the average aspirants and beginners. There is therefore no reason to denigrate the importance of the rituals. Every ritual has, however, some purpose. The purpose behind the ritual and its relevance needs to be kept in mind while performing it; otherwise it becomes lifeless and mechanical. Such performance does not yield the expected benefit. The rituals are primarily meant for cultivating detachment and for augmenting the sense of devotion. Their ultimate objective is to gain equanimity. The lifeless ritualists fail to make out this aspect.

Austerities also are mostly observed with such notions. The main purpose of the external austerities is to develop bearing capability so as to maintain equanimity under difficult circumstances. For example, fasting is meant for developing capability to stay without food for some time, and Äyambil for getting used to tasteless foods. Those purposes are often lost sight of and the people generally observe the austerities with a view to earning Punya.

Moreover, rituals are often carried out with ulterior motives. Desire to be known as a religious person in the community, expectation to get heavenly pleasures in subequent life, inclination to follow the family traditions, and the fear of infernal life are the examples of such ulterior motives. The lifeless ritualists might also think that mere observance of austerities and other restraints, reciting prayer, going to temple, etc. would result in eradication of unwholesome Karma and lead them to Karmaless state. They are not aware that lifeless observance of the rituals can lead to wholesome Karma, but it cannot lead to the Karmaless or liberated state.

As a matter of fact, no activity without internal bearing and true understanding can lead to liberation. The people without internal discrimination thus stay deluded about the liberation. They do not realize that during the infinite wandering, they must have performed rituals and observed austerities countless number of times. That has not brought the lasting well being, nor has it led them on the path of liberation. They are

thus naive to believe that observance of any ritual without an eye towards its purpose can be helpful.

Moreover, the lifeless ritualists object to resorting to the path of knowledge. They think that the path of knowledge is slippery and hazardous. There are too many pitfalls and is not meant for them. As such, they turn their back towards knowledge. Shrimad therefore warns against the performance of rituals without inner discrimination and against the misconceptions prevailing in that respect.

Lifeless rituality occurs even among the followers of Shrimad. Many of them ritually recite Ätmasiddhi Shästra and other compositions as mere routine. Even this stanza is recited mechanically. Very few people remain vigilant about the meaning and purpose of what they recite.

Bandh Moksha Chhe Kalpanä, Bhäkhe Väni Mänhin;
Varte Mohäveshmän, Shushka Jnäni Te Ähin.

Bare knowledgeable are those, who verbally talk of bondage and liberation as being imaginary; but who behave under the influence of delusion. (5)

Explanation & Discussion:

This stanza describes the characteristics of the bare knowledgeable people. A bare knowledgeable one is he, who has acquired information from scriptures but has not applied it in daily life. There are people, who come across the spiritual books dealing with absolute purity of soul. Thereby they conclude that since the soul is intangible, it cannot be defiled; it is incorruptible and stays pure forever. Like Vedänt they contend that soul cannot be polluted and the concept of its defilement is merely imaginary; it always stays pure and does not incur any bondage. Therefore nothing is required to be done for liberation, except to understand the inherent pure nature of soul.

By virtue of their belief in purity of soul, such persons may perhaps stay away from gross passions, but they usually remain unconcerned about the subtle ones. With the belief that sense organs have nothing to do with soul, they are also likely to indulge in sense objects. They fail to realize that the true knowledge of soul does not leave scope for attachment to any worldly object or for indulging in anger, animosity, arrogance, or other defiling instinct. The truly knowledgeable people invariably refrain from indulging in indolence, undue indulgence, infatuation, etc.

On account of previous Karma, the sense of attachment or aversion may at times arise even to an enlightened person, but he understands that such sense is not compatible with the purity of soul and feels sorry that such sense arises. In this connection Shrimad has stated (Vachanämrut # 819) as under.

"When the sense instincts become too powerful, the sensible person feels much grieved to notice the absence of his vigor and continually despises himself. Repeatedly looking at the self with the sense of despise and taking recourse to the words and conduct of the great men, he generates internal vigor and drives back those instincts even by exerting

too much force. He does not sit at rest till then nor does he stay complacent merely by being sorry."

Thus a really knowledgeable person treats the defiling instinct as an ailment and refrains from indulging in attachment or aversion. Having developed true detachment for the worldly objects he does not long for anything. The sense of craving or aversion becomes unbecoming to him. Those, who do not have such concept at heart, merely remain bare knowledgeable. Despite their scriptural knowledge, they stay deluded about the right path and continue to drift in the sea of birth and death.

Vairägyädi Safal To, Jo Sah Ätamjnän;
Temaj Ätamjnänani, Präpti Tanä Nidän.

Detachment, etc. are meaningful, if accompanied by the knowledge of Self.
Moreover, they can serve as the means for attaining the Self-realization. (6)

Explanation & Discussion:

This stanza relates to the vital importance of detachment, renouncement, etc. in spiritual pursuit. Many a time the people experience detachment due to physical pain, emotional distress, loss of dear ones etc. Such detachment is not derived out of true understanding of the transitory nature of worldly life. Hence it does not last and after some time they would again get attracted towards the worldly objects. True knowledge of worldly aspects is thus a requisite for the lasting detachment. Thereby one would realize the essentially temporary nature of every worldly aspect and lose interest therein. That would lead to detachment towards such aspects. In this connection Shrimad has observed as under (Vachanämrut # 718).

"Detachment, renouncement, compassion, etc. need to have internal bearing. They would be fruitful, when associated with self-realization, because that can remove the root cause of birth and death. In other words, detachment, renouncement, compassion etc. become helpful in attaining self-realization. The teaching of true Guru fructifies, when one is imbibed with those attributes. Since such teaching does not become fruitful in absence of refinement at heart, it is said here that detachment etc. are the means for attaining Self-realization.

"For those, who are lifeless ritualists, it is said here that mere bodily restraint does not become helpful in attaining self-realization. Detachment and such other attributes are the requisites for attaining it. Therefore undertake such activities, but do not get stuck there. One cannot get rid of the root cause of birth and death in absence of realization. As such, resort to detachment etc. for the purpose of gaining realization; do not insist that the path of liberation lies in bearing the hardships that do not lead to reduction in defilement."

"To the bare knowledgeable ones, who are devoid of renouncement and detachment, who are merely verbally knowledgeable, it is said that detachment etc. are the means for attaining realization. No outcome arises without a cause. Since you have not even gained detachment and other means, better think at depth how you could have attained self-realization. Self-realization does not arise in absence of highly objective attitude for the worldly life, reduced level of attachment for the body,

detachment for the worldly pleasure, thinning of ego and such other attributes. Those attributes take firmer roots when one attains self-realization, because they get the root in the form of realization. While conceiving of having gained realization, there blazes at your internal level the fire in the form of availing the worldly pleasure, there repeatedly arises the longing for being worshipped or respected and the mind gets perturbed with the slightest discomfort. How does it not come to your notice that these are not the characteristics of having gained realization? Why don't you make out that your claim for gaining realization emanates out of the desire to get reverence? First cultivate the detachment and other means at the internal level so that you can get closer to realization."

Tyäg Viräg Na Chittamän, Thäy Na Tene Jnän;
Atake Tyäg Virägamän, To Bhoole Nij Bhän.

Enlightenmen*t is unattainable without having renouncement and detachment at heart; if, however, one gets stuck with them, he would miss the Self.* (7)

Explanation & Discussion:

The term 'renouncement' is generally understood in the sense of giving up of worldly life. Such external renouncement is useful, but it does not necessarily indicate the true sense of internal renouncement. The internal renouncement consists of giving up of the internal impurities. That can happen only with the radical change in approach. If one understands the true nature of soul, his inclination for worldly objects will begin to go down. He would realize that the external objects cannot give him the lasting happiness. In that case the external renouncement would be in harmony with the detachment at heart. As such, it can help in attainment of enlightenment.

Enlightenment abides within the soul. But that inherent capability remains obscured as long as the worldly soul stays under the impact of Karma. It is therefore necessary to eradicate the bondage of Karma. Such eradication process is called Nirjarä. In this connection Tattvärtha Sutra states (IX-3): "Tapasä Nirjarä Cha". It means that the eradication of Karma can be achieved by austerities. Many people therefore resort to austerities and restraints in order to shake off the bondage of Karma. Most of them, however, overlook the fact that enlightenment cannot arise so long as there stays any inclination for the worldly pleasure. Nirjarä thus takes place, only if austerities and restraints are accompanied by the absence of desire for worldly objects. It is therefore necessary that the spiritual aspirant develops the true sense of renouncement and detachment.

It should also be remembered that renouncement and detachment are the means, not the ends of spiritual pursuit. They are the prerequisites for treading on the spiritual path. After getting equipped with those requisites one needs to go ahead in spiritual pursuit. Some people resort to external renouncement, develop detachment, and then stop at that level. This stanza warns that if they do not go ahead, they would not gain enlightenment and miss the real objective of spiritual pursuit.

Jyän Jyän Je Je Yogya Chhe, Tahän SamajavuTeh;
Tyän Tyän Te Te Ächare, Ätmärthi Jan Eh.

The seeker of truth would everywhere accept what is appropriate and would act accordingly in every situation. (8)

Explanation & Discussion:

In light of what has been stated in stanzas 4 and 5, every spiritual aspirant should examine his particular situation and try to find out what is lacking so as to remedy it. If he has been pursuing the rituals without regard for the purpose thereof, he should keep the attainment of self-realization in his view; and if he has been feeling gratified with bare knowledge, he should try to see that he does not harbor any attachment for the worldly objects. For controlling the sense of attachment he should integrate restraints, worship, devotion, virtues, etc. in his life style.

Devotion and worship do denote some sense of attachment. Such attachment is wholesome and desirable until one attains high spiritual level, where one can stay tuned to his soul. Devotion for and worship of the omniscient Lords and Guru are useful to most aspirants, especially in initial development. That approach maintains a balanced life and enables them to proceed on the path of liberation.

This stanza can also be interpreted without reference to those two stanzas. In that case it can be considered as setting up the standard for truth-seekers. Such people should be ready to accept the truth in every situation and put it into practice. They should have the discretion to understand what is right and what is wrong, be willing to adopt the right and discard the wrong. This should be done irrespective of the tradition in which they might have been brought up. Their objective should be to seek the truth from whatever corner it comes forth. For that purpose they need to have an open mind. Moreover, they should also be willing to notice their deficiencies and drawbacks and to adopt changes, where necessary. In other words, they should be guided by the criterion of truth and be prepared to act accordingly.

Seve Sadguru Charanane, Tyägi Dai Nij Paksha;
Päme Te Paramärthane, Nijpadano Le Laksha.

Giving up his own view point, if one serves at the feet of a true Guru,
he would understand the real truth and proceed towards self-*realization.* (9)

Explanation & Discussion:

The primary objective of spiritual pursuit is to get on the path of liberation. The nature of soul is the ultimate truth and the way it can be realized is Paramärth. The main obstacle in realizing it is that one may either feel satisfied with lifeless rituals or may be stuck with bare knowledge. The reason for adhering to such a one-sided approach is that the aspirant has not sought the shelter of a true Guru. While explaining this stanza at length Shrimad has pointed out the importance of a true Guru in spiritual pursuit in the following words (Vachanämrut # 718).

"The way to overcome lifeless rituality and the bare knowledgeable state is to give up one's own views and to rest at the feet of a true Guru. The lifeless ritualists have taken recourse to wrong gurus, who do not have self-realization and do not know the right way. They know the path of rituals and physical hardships, to which they draw the people and get them attached to the family tradition. Thereby such people cease to have the inclination to come in contact with a true Guru. If they happen to come in such contact, they are not receptive to the true teaching on account of their rigid sectarian approach.

"The bare knowledgeable persons also have not taken the shelter of a true Guru. They have read the spiritual books according to their own fancy and consider themselves knowledgeable thereby, or by listening to the bare knowledgeable ones. To be considered as knowledgeable confers a position of honor and they cherish it.

"From a peculiar consideration, the scriptures have laid the parity of pity, charity, violence and worship. Without understanding its implications the bare knowledgeable makes use of such words merely for being considered knowledgeable. He does not know how such words are to be utilized for gaining the ultimate benefit. As the scriptures have said about the futility of pity, etc. so have they said about the futility of learning up to nine Poorvas. That signifies the negation of barren knowledge. The bare knowledgeable person, however, does not look at it on account of his ego and the craze for being considered knowledgeable. That does not give him scope for the right thinking.

"Both the lifeless ritualists and bare knowledgeable people have been on the wrong track. Their claim to have gained the right path clearly shows their vain persistence. If they had taken refuge at the feet of a true Guru, they would have been induced towards the means for self-realization, whereby they could be treading the right path."

Prior to getting access to a true Guru, the spiritual aspirant might have undertaken different activities as per his understanding. He might have resorted to various gurus and adopted their views. All such exercises have not been helpful in realizing the self, because they were undertaken in absence of the guidance from a true Guru. Shrimad therefore says that whatever the worldly soul has gained so far has been acquired from the mundane perspective, not from the enlightened one. If one now comes in contact with an enlightened Guru, he must be prepared to leave all other gurus and to give up all his notions and beliefs. He should be ready to adopt the shelter of the true Guru and undertake whatever he commands. Since true Guru has already treaded on the path and knows the obstacles on the way, he can guide the disciple suitably. He knows the shortcomings of the disciple and can therefore instruct him about the right scriptural study and the appropriate means of detachment. Treading on that road under the right guidance is the way of gaining self-realization.

Ätmajnän Samadarshitä, Vichare Udayprayog;
Apoorva Väni Paramashrut, Sadguru Lakshan Yogya.

Knowledge of Self, equanimity, activities as ordained, unparalleled words and mastery over scriptures are the characteristics of a true Guru. (10)

Explanation & Discussion:

After stressing the importance of surrendering at the feet of a true Guru this stanza specifies five characteristics of such a Guru. Self-realization, equanimity, life style as ordained, unparalleled speech, and authentic scriptural knowledge are the main characteristics by which one can identify a true Guru. By stating that he should be self-realized, the emphasis is laid on the distinguished knowledge. By saying that he should be imbibed with equanimity, the emphasis is laid on the distinguished perception. By stating that he should behave as ordained, the emphasis is laid on the blissful mode of life. Thus the importance of the right knowledge, right perception, and right behavior is specified in the first line.

The second line specifies the characteristics of speech and scriptural knowledge. The Guru should have a distinguished way of expression. He should have the capability to use the words, which can help in removing the wrong beliefs. Only such words can penetrate the hearts of listeners. Such words do not easily come forth. They are therefore termed here as unparalleled. Only those, who are highly knowledgeable and enlightened, can utter such words. It is therefore said here that the Guru should be well-versed and should have mastery over the scriptures.

The explanatory note under this stanza (Vachanämrut # 718) provides another version. It uses the terms Swarupsthit and Ichchhärahit in place of Ätmajnän and Samadarshitä. Swarupsthit denotes staying tuned to the true nature of soul. One, who has knowledge of Self, either abides in that state or strives to reach that state. Ichchhärahit denotes the desireless state of mind. That state is implicit in equanimity. That term makes the principal attribute of equanimity more explicit.

Spiritual pursuit rests on surrendering to the true Guru. This stanza, however, makes it clear that the aspirant should not surrender to any ordinary person. He should keep the above-mentioned characteristics in mind while looking for a true Guru and surrender to the one, who fulfills those criteria. Thereby the aspirant can get on the right path.

Pratyaksha Sadguru Sam Nahin, Paroksha Jin Upakär;
Evo Laksha Thayä Vinä, Uge Na Ätmavichär.

Contemplation of Self cannot arise without realizing that the benefits flowing from a live Guru are incomparably superior to those from the remote omniscient Lords. (11)

Explanation & Discussion:

This stanza points out the importance of learning from a live Guru. It states that the instructions of such a Guru are more helpful than the teachings from the omniscient Lords, who are not now accessible to us. This is not meant to belittle the importance of Lords' teachings. The omniscient Lords were perfectly enlightened, while the present Guru might be at the stage of self-realization striving for the perfection. As such, there is no scope for comparing the two in absolute terms.

What the Lords have said is available to us in the form of scriptures. But the scriptural texts have deep underlying meanings, which will not be clear to a person, who has not dwelt deep into spiritualism. If one tries to resort to those texts on his own,

he is likely to misinterpret their contents; he might go astray and become bare knowledgeable. The remote Lords are not going to come and tell him that he has not correctly understood the texts; nor will they be able to guide the disciple about the obstructions lying on the path of liberation. The scriptural texts simply describe the path; but the essence of the path is at the heart of a Guru, who has treaded on that path. A knowledgeable and enlightened Guru can point out the aspirant's mistakes and tiy to bring him back on the right path. It is therefore said that the secret of soul lies at the heart of a live Guru. Unless one is convinced of it, he would not be able to conceive of the true nature of soul.

Sadgurunä Upadesh Van, Samajäy Na Jin Roop;
Samajyä Van Upakär Sho? Samajye Jin Swaroop.

The omniscient state cannot be understood unless explained by a true Guru.
Without understanding there is no benefit; and understanding leads to omniscience.
*(*12)

Explanation & Discussion:

What has been said in the previous stanza is made more explicit in this stanza. It states that the aspirants cannot grasp of their own accord the true nature of the omniscient state. The worldly soul has always identified itself with the body and its relations. How can it comprehend the bodiless state of the liberated souls or the state of the omniscient Lords? Though being embodied, the omniscient Lords stay beyond the bodily sense. It is very difficult to comprehend the state of those Lords, unless it is explained by an enlightened Guru. The following verse of the saint Kabir is relevant in this respect.

Guru Gobind Dono Khade, Kisko Lägun Päy?
Balihäri Gurudevki, Jinhe Gobind Diyo Batäy.

It means: Whose feet shall I fall at if God and Guru are both standing before me? The higher beneficence comes from the Guru, because he helped in recognizing God.

A devotee may pray and worship the omniscient Lords. He may also think that the Lords have rendered obligation by describing the true path, and recite the appropriate verses in token of his devotion. Does he get benefit merely from that? The whole purpose of worship is to get on the path treaded by the Lords. But if one does not know the true state of the Lords, how can he understand the path treaded by them? What benefit would he then get merely by worshipping the Lords?

If he comprehends the state of the omniscient Lords by getting explanation from a true Guru, he can also understand the path of liberation indicated by the Lords. Then he will surely go ahead on that path and attain the liberation. In other words, he will attain the state that the Lords have attained. It is therefore said here that right understanding will lead to omniscience.

Ätmädi Astitvanä, Jeh Nirupak Shästra;

Pratyaksha Sadguru Yog Nahin, Tyan Ädhär Supätra.

The scriptures dealing with the existence of soul, etc. can be the recourse for the deserving aspirants, where direct contact with true Guru is not available. (13)

Explanation & Discussion:

The importance of Guru has been explained in the preceding two stanzas. But the question is, 'How to come across the Guru, who satisfies the criteria specified in stanza 10?' There was shortage of true Gurus even in good times. It is therefore no wonder that they would be rarely available in the present declining period. If some of them exist, they are likely to stay away from the society. It would therefore be improbable to come across a true Guru. Under these circumstances 'Who to rely upon' would be a problem for spiritual aspirants.

This stanza points out the way for the aspirants in absence of a true Guru. That is meant only for the deserving aspirants. It states that the aspirants, who have gained adequate spiritual background, can depend on the right books when a true Guru is not available. The spiritual books, which deal with the existence of soul and other related matters, would be useful to such deserving aspirants.

It should be noted that such books cannot take the place of an enlightened Guru. A spiritual aspirant can, however, continue his progress by resorting to such books in absence of a true Guru. Then he will stay vigilant and be more qualified to receive the directions from a live Guru; and that can lead to self-realization.

A word of caution is needed here. There are a number of books that purport to deal with the soul and spiritual aspects. Many of them are not written with right perspective and therefore cannot be relied upon. Only those, which have been written by the reliable persons, can be depended upon. The persons, who can thus be relied upon, are called Äpta. That term denotes the persons who have no interest other than the well being of soul. Such persons are self-realized. Only the books written by such authentic persons should be relied upon in the absence of a true Guru.

Athavä Sadgurue Kahyän, Je Avagähan Käj;
Te Te Nitya Vichärvän, Kari Matäntar Tyäj.

Otherwise leaving aside different viewpoints, one should always study and contemplate over the books recommended by the true Guru for in-depth study. (14)

Explanation & Discussion:

This stanza provides the criterion for selecting the reliable books. If the aspirant has come across a true Guru, the latter might have suggested the right books. For instance, reverend Laghuräjswämi had repeatedly urged to contemplate over Letter of Six Fundamentals, Sadguru Bhakti Rahasya, Yam Niyam and Kshamäpanä. The spiritual aspirant should therefore regularly ponder over their contents. Moreover, if he happens to come in contact with another true Guru, the aspirant should follow his advice and undertake the study of the books that he recommends. He should seriously go through such literature and repeatedly ponder

over the same with the objective of achieving self-realization. For that purpose he needs to renounce his preconceived notions and to study the recommended books.

It is very rare to come across a true Guru and get his guidance. Even for those, who are lucky to get access to such a Guru, it is not possible to remain in continuous contact with him. Such aspirants therefore need to secure the advice of the knowledgeable ones about the right literature. It will enable them to pursue spiritual development in absence of true Guru.

Roke Jiv Swachchhand To, Päme Avashya Moksha;
Pämyä Em Anant Chhe, Bhäkhyun Jin Nirdosh.

One, who restrains self-indulgence, surely attains liberation.
The flawless omniscient Lords have stated that innumerable souls have attained it that way. (15)

Explanation & Discussion:

Why has the worldly soul not attained liberation? There could, of course, be many reasons, but the most important one is self-indulgence. It is not that the soul would have never tried to learn about liberation. During the innumerable births that it has taken, it must have been oriented towards its well being on several occasions and might even have tried for the same. But whatever it might have understood and done for the purpose must have been according to its own viewpoint. That amounts to self-indulgence. The root cause of self-indulgence is ego or false pride. It is not possible for one to get rid of his own self-indulgence, because his ego and pride do not allow him to see his own faults.

It has to be borne in mind that the soul has been indulging in worldly life since the infinity. It has never learnt the truth and therefore did not come across the path of liberation. As such, if one tries to seek liberation on his own, how is he going to make out the right path? Without knowing that path, would not his efforts amount to traveling in the dark? Would it not be like a person looking for an unknown place without having help from someone who knows it?

If a person thus tries to find the place on his own, he would wander here and there and not reach the destination. Such effort can be termed as self-indulgence. In the worldly realm, however, it may become possible for one to reach his destination by chance without help from any one; in the spiritual realm, however, such self-indulgence is of no avail. Since it is impossible to gain right insight without proper guidance, the approach selected by one's own intelligence cannot be right. The intellect, which has never even dreamt of the truth, is not competent to overcome ignorance. A spiritual aspirant therefore needs to give up his self-indulgence and go to a self-realized person. Only such a person can show the right path. That would enable him to proceed in the right direction and reach the destination.

This stanza therefore states that one, who gives up self-indulgence, certainly attains liberation. The omniscient Lords have stated that infinite number of souls have

attained the same accordingly. If one tries to figure out why he still continues to wander, he can make out that he has not given up self-indulgence. Had he given it up, he would have taken recourse to a true Guru, who would have put him on the right track. Giving up self-indulgence is therefore the main precept of the omniscient Lords. Those Lords are perfect and flawless, because they have got rid of all the drawbacks by eradicating the bondage of Karma and have become omniscient. As such, whatever they have stated is true and flawless.

Pratyaksha Sadguru Yogathi, Swachchhand Te Rokäy;
Anya Upäy Karyä Thaki, Präye Bamano Thäy.

Self-indulgence can be overcome by direct contact with a true Guru; it would be mostly doubled by resorting to other means. (16)

Explanation & Discussion:

How can self-indulgence be removed? Of course, it cannot be done by one's own efforts. It is almost impossible to see own faults. The right way is to get in contact with a true Guru. If one happens to go astray, the Guru is there to bring him back on the right track. Thus he continues to get guidance as and when necessary. It leaves no scope for self-indulgence. The Guru knows where and when the pupil is likely to fall in the trap of self-indulgence and keeps him in check from falling therein.

The pupil also knows his weakness and will rely upon the guidance of the Guru. When one thus tends to rely on the enlightened person, his ego melts and his inclination towards self-indulgence goes on declining. The other way to overcome self-indulgence is to try on one's own. But such effort itself amounts to further self-indulgence! It would be an attempt to overcome self-indulgence with the help of self-indulgence. That can never succeed. On the contrary, it would result in higher level of self-indulgence. It is therefore said here that self-indulgence is likely to be doubled by resorting to other means.

Swachchhand, Mat Ägrah Taji, Varte Sadguru Laksha;
Samakit Tene Bhäkhiyun, Käran Gani Pratyaksha.

Renouncing self-indulgence, personal viewpoints and persistence therein, if one acts as directed by a true Guru, that action is termed as right perception, being the obvious cause thereof. (17)

Explanation & Discussion:

Self-indulgence, holding one's own views, and sticking to the opinions formed thereon do not allow a person to seek right guidance. If one gives them up and seeks the shelter of a true Guru, the Guru would show him the path that the worldly soul has never come across. One would then proceed on that path and achieve self-realization. Thus resorting to the right shelter with an unbiased mind is the obvious cause of self-realization. It can therefore be termed as right perception or Samakit.

In this connection, Shrimad has observed (Vachanämrut # 771): "It is not to be taken as a principle that all the monks, nuns, and lay followers of Lord Tirthankars knew about the sentient and insentient matters and hence endowed with right

perception. Many of them were said to have right perception because they had the conviction, willingness, recourse, and firm determination that Lord Tirthankars are the true Guides; they have laid the path of liberation, and the way they have directed is the right path for attaining liberation."

Every occurrence or event has a cause. Conversely, if there is a cause, its result is bound to arise. In other words, the result is inherent in the cause. Therefore the cause itself is sometimes treated as the result. Shrimad here makes use of that logic and states that molding the life as per instructions of a Guru, being the cause of right perception, is itself the right perception.

The causes are of two types. One is the absolute cause known as Upädän, and the other is instrumental cause known as Nimitta. The Upädän is inherent in the subject and indicates its potentiality. For instance, right perception is potentially lying within the soul. The question is to manifest the same. The factor, which becomes instrumental in such manifestation, is called Nimitta. Going to the shelter of a true Guru is the Nimitta that leads to the manifestation of right perception.

Mänädik Shatru Mahä, Nij Chhande Na Maräy;
Jätä Sadguru Sharanamän, Alpa Prayäse Jäy.

Mighty foes like egotism cannot be destroyed by one's own indulgence;
they can be overcome with little effort by surrendering to a true Guru. (18)

Explanation & Discussion:

In Jain terminology, the defiling instincts are called Kashäy. Krodh (Anger), Män (Ego), Mäyä (Deception), and Lobh (Greed) are the four main types of Kashäy, which a spiritual aspirant needs to overcome. It is, however, the experience of those, who have tried to overcome them, that it is very hard to do so. Such instincts are therefore termed here as mighty foes. In Vaidic tradition the defilement is actually termed as Ripu, which means enemy. That tradition considers sexual indulgence, anger, delusion, greed, ego and jealousy as six enemies of the spiritual aspirants. Those enemies are so strong that it would not be possible to overcome them by one's own efforts. It is therefore necessary to seek help. This stanza states that such help can come from a true Guru, and the defiling instincts can be easily overcome by going to the shelter of such a Guru.

Since the above mentioned four types of Kashäy are usually presented in the order of anger, ego, deception, and greed, one would expect this stanza to start with Krodhädi (Anger etc.) instead of Mänadi (Ego etc.). That order, however, pertains to the time factor in which the Kashäy can be overcome. Krodh, for instance, is gross and can be easily identified, while other instincts are subtle and are not so evident. Therefore it is comparatively easy to overcome the instinct of anger first. Greed or desire is the last to be overcome.

In Vachanämrut (Vyäkhyänsär-1, #199) Shrimad has mentioned that the order in which Kashäy arises consists of ego, greed, deceit, and anger. Ego is the predominant Kashäy among humans. If something happens to hurt our ego, we find it hard to bear

it. We are egoistic and are not willing to let it down. We want to preserve it at all costs. Shrimad has therefore written in Sadguru Bhakti Rahasya (Vachanämrut # 264):

Anant Kälathi Äthadyo, Vinä Bhän Bhagawän;
Sevyä Nahin Guru Santane, Mukyun Nahin Abhimän.

It means that the worldly soul has been wandering since the infinity because of the ignorance of its true nature. That happens on account of not surrendering to the true Guru and that in turn happens, because the soul has not given up the ego.

Egotism is thus the foremost Kashäy, which is very hard to overcome and which prolongs the worldly life. It is therefore stated (Vachanämrut # 21-83) that had there been no ego (false pride), the world would have been a heaven. This stanza therefore starts with Mänädi.

Je Sadguru Upadeshthi, Pämyo Kevaljnän;
Guru Rahyä Chhadmastha Pan, Vinay Kare Bhagawän.

One, who attains omniscience from the teachings of a right Guru, reveres him, even though the Guru might not have attained omniscience. (19)

Explanation & Discussion:

It would have been clear from the discussion so far that help from a true Guru is of utmost importance in spiritual pursuit. Its importance cannot be overemphasized. This stanza states that the teaching of a Guru can lead the pupil even to omniscience. Therefore one should obviously give respect to him. Such respect implies modesty on the part of the pupil. Modesty is a great virtue and helps tremendously in learning what the preceptor indicates. Thereby one can rapidly rise on the path of liberation.

It is also possible that one becomes omniscient even before the Guru attains it. The term used here for such a Guru is Chhadmastha. The word Chhadman denotes the cover or the mask that conceals. As such, Chhadmastha indicates the state of concealment. Here it relates to concealment of the omniscient state. The state, in which the true nature of soul remains concealed by virtue of the impact of Karma, is called Chhadmastha.

That stanza relates to a situation where the disciple might have gained omniscience, while the Guru has remained Chhadmastha; he could be self-realized but has not yet gained omniscience. That has actually happened in several cases. For instance, Gautamswämi could not forgo his attachment for Lord Mahävir and hence did not gain omniscience during the Lord's lifetime, though many of his own pupils had attained it.

There is also the classic example of Chandanbälä and her pupil Mrugävati. On account of the illusion arising out of the Lord's aura, Mrugävati once stayed in the Lord's assembly beyond the sunset. As she arrived late at her place, Chandanbälä reprimanded her for not infringing the code that forbids monks and nuns to stay out after sunset. Mrugävati felt very sorry for that lapse and went into deep remorse. Since the remorse had arisen from the innermost corner of her heart, it resulted in destroying all her Karmas and she attained omniscience that very night. By virtue thereof she could notice, in the dark of the night, a snake passing by the hand of Chandanbälä, who was fast asleep. Thereupon Mrugävati lightly moved aside her hand. That caused Chandanbälä to wake up and she came to know of the pupil's omniscience. She felt very sorry for reprimanding such an elevated soul. She too went into deep remorse and attained the omniscience.

Thus reverence is of fundamental importance in spiritual pursuit. By resorting to it one can make progress beyond imagination. The pupil, who gains omniscience before the preceptor, does not forsake the importance of reverence and continues to revere the preceptor, under whose guidance he pursued the spiritual path and attained the omniscient state.

Evo Märga Vinay Tano, Bhäkhyo Shri Viträg;
Mool Hetu E Märgano, Samaje Koi Subhägya.

The holy Lords have stated such a path of reverence; only a few fortunate can understand the real significance of that path. (20)

Explanation & Discussion:

Reverence plays a vital role in spiritual pursuit. Its importance has been emphasized by the omniscient Lords in their sermons and is retained in the scriptures. Unfortunately very few people realize that importance. They therefore tend to behave irreverently, which leads to prolongation of the worldly life; they have to continue the transmigration. Shrimad therefore states here that those few, who understand the importance of reverence, are lucky. The word used for the purpose is Subhägya, which means fortunate. But it also relates to the name of his devotee Saubhägyabhäi by whose request Shrimad has written this Ätmasiddhi Shästra.

Asadguru E Vinayano, Läbh Lahe Jo Känyi;
Mahämohaniya Karmathi, Boode Bhavajal Mänhi.

If a wrong guru takes undue advantage of that reverence,
he would be drowned in the sea of worldly existence by virtue of intense delusive Karma. (21)

Explanation & Discussion:

After explaining the importance of reverence on the part of pupil, Shrimad here indicates what would happen, if a wrong guru (Unenlightened one) takes advantage of the pupil's reverence with a selfish motive. That can happen in the form of taking undue advantage of pupil's reverence for the purpose of acquiring name, fame, respect etc. It would constitute disregard for the enlightened Gurus and others, who are on the path of liberation. By taking such undue advantage the wrong guru would acquire intense delusive Karma and would stay in worldly existence for inordinately long time.

Everything that one does attracts the appropriate Karma. There are eight main categories of Karma. Of these, the primarily responsible for the worldly existence is Mohaniya (Deluding) Karma, which stays for a long time. Its maximum duration is stipulated at 7000 trillion Sagaropam (An ocean-measured unit) years. It is therefore known as Mahämohaniya Karma. The wrong guru would thus be subject to such long lasting Karma. Since that duration is almost immeasurable, it is said that he would virtually be drowned in the sea of worldly existence.

Hoy Mumukshu Jiva Te, Samaje Eh Vichär;
Hoy Matärthi Jiva Te, Avalo Le Nirdhär.

One who is a truth seeker would understand this concept; one who is sectarian would arrive at the wrong conclusion. (22)

Hoy Matärthi Tehane, Thäy Na Ätam Laksha;
Teh Matärthi Laxano, Ahin Kahyän Nirpaksha.

One, who is a sectarian, cannot turn towards the soul; the characteristics of such sectarians are impartially given hereunder. (23)

Explanation & Discussion:

The spiritual aspirants are divided into two main categories. One pertains to those, who have realized the futility of pursuing the spiritual goal on their own. They would seek the refuge of an enlightened Guru so as to get on the right path of liberation. The term used for them is Mumukshu, which literally means a liberation seeker. They are obviously truth seekers.

The other category relates to those, who are engrossed in self-indulgence and cling to their own viewpoints. They would consider the beliefs and rituals of their particular sect as right ones. They would also try to understand the Lords' precepts according to their own concepts. Such people are called Matärthi or sectarian. Since the approach of the worldly soul has remained perverted since infinity due to his indulgence in worldly aspects, it is not possible for him to get to the right path on his own. A sectarian does not realize his inability to correctly make out what has been stated by the Lords. As such, he is prone to draw wrong conclusions. The characteristics of such sectarians are impartially described in the next chapter.

Chapter 2 Characteristics of Sectarians (Matärthis)

There are different viewpoints from which an object or situation can be presented. When it is presented from one particular viewpoint, it is called Naya. Jainism specifies seven categories of Naya, but they can be classified in two broad categories, viz. (1) absolute viewpoint known as Nishchay Naya, and (2) practical or worldly viewpoint known as Vyavahär Naya. When an object is described in its pure unadulterated form, it is called Nishchay Naya. The soul, in its true form, is pure, blissful consciousness; it is full of happiness, knowledge, perception, etc. To describe it that way is Nishchay Naya. The worldly soul is, however, found in unhappy and ignorant state; it is smeared with Karma. To describe it in that form is Vyavahär Naya.

Both these viewpoints are correct in their own context and should therefore be taken into consideration for reaching the right conclusion. If one adopts only the absolute viewpoint, he would come to the conclusion that soul is immutable and incorruptible. As such, he would tend to believe that devotion, detachment, restraints, etc. are of no avail and would therefore give them up. Resorting to the absolute viewpoint to the exclusion of the practical or worldly viewpoint thus leads to illusive conclusion. The term for that illusive impression is Äbhäs. Exclusively resorting to the absolute viewpoint is therefore not Nishchay Naya; it is Nishchayäbhäs, meaning illusory absolute viewpoint. Similarly considering the practical viewpoint to the exclusion of the absolute viewpoint is not Vyavahär Naya, it is Vyavahäräbhäs.

Lifeless ritualists and bare knowledgeable ones were described in the last chapter. A lifeless ritualist insists on ritual practices to the exclusion of knowledge and is therefore Vyavahäräbhäsi. A bare knowledgeable person insists on the absolute view to the exclusion of worldly realities and is therefore Nishchayäbhäsi. This sort of onesided thinking is not helpful in arriving at the truth. The people belonging to either of these categories are sectarian (Matärthi), because they try to tread on the path of liberation by resorting to their one-sided viewpoint.

In this chapter Shrimad has described the characteristics of such sectarian people. The first five stanzas are devoted to the characteristics of Vyavahäräbhäsi, the subsequent three stanzas to those of Nishchayäbhäsi, and the remaining two stanzas are common to both of them.

Bähya Tyäg Pan Jnän Nahin, Te Mäne Guru Satya;
Athavä Nijkuldharmanä, Te Gurumän Ja Mamatva.

The sectarian believes those as true gurus, who have outwardly renounced, but do not have enlightenment; or he has affinity for the family gurus, who belong to his sect. (24)

Explanation & Discussion:

Spiritual pursuit consists of treading on the path of liberation. When the right path for the purpose is not known to a spiritual aspirant, he needs to know the same from a

true Guru. Those, who are truth seekers, can recognize a true Guru from the characteristics given in stanza 10. But a sectarian holds wrong beliefs about the guru. Either he goes in for the outward symbols or attaches importance to the family and sectarian aspects. He is impressed by the external renouncement and would therefore accept such persons as gurus. Those gurus could even be devoid of right knowledge and without any sense of internal detachment. As such, they might be indulging in passions as well. But a sectarian does not care for that. He goes by the outward signs and regards those as gurus, who wear monk's garb, perform different types of rituals, and observe external austerities.

The question may arise, 'Is external renouncement of no avail? The omniscient Lords have mainly stipulated the path of renouncement. If that is of no avail, why did Lord Tirthankars and other great personages give up family life and become monks?' External renouncement is no doubt useful, but it needs to be associated with inner detachment resulting from enlightenment. The inner detachment arises from the right understanding of the nature of soul. This can occur when a spiritual aspirant reverently surrenders to a truly enlightened Guru. The absolute and unconditional surrender to a true Guru must take place while renouncing the wrong beliefs. Then only it can lead to enlightenment. Mere external renouncement, without any inner implication, has little significance in spiritual realm.

The so-called gurus have no renouncement at heart nor are they enlightened. They might have renounced the family life in line with their tradition or on account of some other external considerations. They might adopt the garb of a monk, but they have no inclination for knowing the Self. A sectarian would, however, consider them as reliable gurus. He would have more regard for the traditional family guru or for one belonging to his own caste and creed. Such sectarian or family gurus are mostly resorted to with ulterior motives like the desire to nurture ego and pride or to earn respect from the community. Such gurus get their followers attached to the family traditions and make them non-receptive to true teaching.

The wrong perception about a guru would include similar perception for the divinity as well. That constitutes Mithyätva (wrong belief), which is the principal cause of transmigration and worldly wandering.

Je Jindeh Pramänane, Samavasaranädi Siddhi;
Varnan Samaje Jinanun, Roki Rahe Nij Buddhi.

He considers the appearance of the Lord's body and the splendor of his assembly, etc. as the description of the Lord and restricts his intelligence to it. (25)

Explanation & Discussion:

After describing the sectarian approach arising from the wrong perception of guru, this stanza relates to one arising from the misconception about the state of Lords. A sectarian has faith in the omniscient Lords, but he misunderstands their true image. The Lords have attained perfect purity. Every soul has infinite capabilities and the omniscient Lords have fully manifested the same. As such, they are endowed with many accomplishments. Even the heavenly beings take pride in serving them.

The Lords also have marvelous bodies. Most people are amazed to know about the magnificent physique, and the pomp & splendor associated with their assemblies and movement. When they read that the Lords' assemblies are organized by celestial beings, are splendidly decorated with jewels, diamonds etc. and that the golden

lotuses are placed wherever the Lords put their feet, they are awe-struck and believe that those aspects constitute the main attributes of Lords. Thus they overlook the internal attributes, which constitute the true image of Lords.

Here the questions may arise, 'What is the purpose of underestimating the above mentioned antecedents of Lords? Their form, their voice, their aura, canopy over the heads, Ashok tree, showering of heavenly flowers, etc. are held in adoration even by the celestial beings. Why should such extraordinary aspects be considered of little significance or be treated as subservient to other attributes?'

Those antecedents are, of course, extraordinary. But they are insignificant as compared to the inner majesty of the Lords. When the people remain in awe with only the external aspects, they cannot conceive of Lords' inner state. They forget that the external aspects, however magnificent they may seem, do not present the lasting image of Lords. They are incidental to their inner achievements. They are by-products of the inner state. Inner majesty consists of the absolute purity of soul, which is blissful, immutable and everlasting. That is the real image of Lords. But the sectarians do not look at that. They are impressed by only the external accomplishments and consider the same as the true image of the omniscient Lords. The scriptures consider such concept as misplaced and misleading. It is analogous to describing a capital city as the king.

Pratyaksha Sadguruyogamän, Varte Drashti Vimukh;
Asadgurune Dradh Kare, Nij Mänärthe Mukhya.

In the case of direct access to a true Guru he turns about his face and reaffirms his belief in the wrong guru mostly for the sake of his ego. (26)

Explanation & Discussion:

This stanza deals with the misplaced faith of a sectarian in wrong guru. He has cultivated firm faith in his guru and feels sure that the path of liberation lies in the way his guru says. As such, he is not receptive to any other way. If he comes across a true Guru, that Guru would obviously urge him to give up the wrong notions and prejudices that he might have formed.

The sectarian would be scared to hear it and would turn his face away, thinking that what the true Guru says is wrong and is not in the interest of his well being. He would then go to his traditional guru and display how much he respects and how staunchly he follows the traditional aspects. That also helps in preserving his ego, because his guru would feel pleased with his sense of devotion and would praise him for being a true follower. He would thus get esteem for his faith in the traditional approach.

D*evädi Gati Bhangamän, Je Samaje Shrutjnän;*
Mäne Nij Mat Veshano, Ägrah Mukti Nidän.

He takes the classification of heavenly and other states of existence as constituting the scriptural knowledge, and believes that insisting on his views and on his sectarian attire will gain him liberation. (27)

Explanation & Discussion:

This stanza deals with the wrong concept of the sectarian regarding scriptural knowledge. Jainism specifies five categories of knowledge. The first two relate to the intellectual and scriptural knowledge, which are termed as Mati Jnän and Shrut Jnän. Gaining knowledge starts from that level and ends in omniscience, which is termed as Kevaljnän.

The scriptures divide worldly life in four categories of heavenly, human, animal, and infernal existence. The unhappiness and misery associated with the worldly life of those four categories are explained at length in the sacred books. The scriptural texts specify 198 subcategories of heavenly beings, 303 of humans, 48 of animals, and 14 of infernal making a total of 563 subcategories. A sectarian does not make out that the purpose of that classification is to show the great variety of species in which the worldly soul has been wandering. Instead, he would consider those details as constituting the essence of scriptural knowledge and try to memorize and reiterate such divisions and subdivisions.

This type of knowledge is actually meant for inducing people to look inward. Thereby one should be led to ponder that he has been wandering in so many categories of life since the infinity and he should now endeavor to be free from that. But what is likely to happen is that by knowing about the luxuries of heavenly life one may aspire to get that type of life. In other words, he develops longing for a new worldly existence. Is it not pitiable that the scriptural knowledge of different types of existence should induce one to desire the continuation of worldly existence?

He would also hold strong opinions about traditions and strictly adhere to the same. He would attach more importance to external clothing and insist that without being attired in a particular way or without holding some specific symbols no one can attain liberation. He does not know that Jainism has stipulated 15 categories of Siddhas, inclusive of those in non-Jain traditions. The poor fellow does not realize that liberation consists of getting rid of all sorts of attachment, dress code, classes, prejudices etc. Where is the scope therein for clinging to this or that attire? The sectarian people, however, remain stuck with such superficial considerations!

Lahyun Swarup Na Vruttinun, Grahyun Vrat Abhimän;
Grahe Nahin Paramärthane, Levä Laukik Män.

He does not recognize the bent of his tendencies and stays proud of observing restraints; for the sake of gaining worldly esteem, he stays away from the path of true bliss. (28)

Explanation & Discussion:

The main factor that does not allow a sectarian to see the truth is his ego. This stanza explains how ego causes him to stay oblivious of his wrong tendencies. It is necessary that the spiritual aspirant remains aware of his tendencies, which govern his activities. There are mainly two types of tendencies, those leaning towards the soul and those leaning towards the worldly life. The spiritual endeavor consists of overcoming the latter. Observance of restraints and austerities has been specified for that purpose.

What is required is that one should first take cognizance of his wrong tendencies and resort to restraints and austerities for overcoming the same. If that aspect is not kept in view, the wrong tendencies would continue to prevail simultaneously with observance of restraints and austerities. In that case the observance would not serve any purpose. Restraining the wrong tendencies is therefore considered essential in spiritual pursuit.

Tattvärtha Sutra (VIII-13) states: "Nihshalyo Vrati." It means that restraints are meant for those who are free from faults. The scriptures mention deception, wrong perception and expectation of reward as three faults that hurt the most and hence need to be overcome. Those faults are indicative of one's wrong tendencies. But a sectarian does not look at his wrong tendencies and remains proud that he has been observing restraints and austerities. He does not recognize that the main purpose of observing the restraints is to gain equanimity. As a matter of fact, that is the objective of all spiritual pursuits. Observance of restraints and austerities without awareness of that purpose constitutes lifeless rituality.

Being ignorant of that purpose a sectarian would feel elated that he has been observing restraints and austerities. As people know about his observance, they consider him highly religious and give him regard and respect as such. He too feels happy to get such esteem and stays satisfied with it. If he comes across a true Guru, he would not adopt his teaching. He would feel that if he gives up the traditional approach, he would lose the respect and regard that he has gained. For the sake of maintaining his ego he thus leaves aside the true nature of soul; he abandons the very objective of observing the restraints and austerities.

Athavä Nishchay Naya Grahe, Mätra Shabdani Mäny;
Lope Sadvyavahärne, Sädhan Rahit Thäy.

Otherwise a sectarian mere verbally resorts to the absolute point of view; he thus forsakes the right practices and stands deprived of the means. (29)

Explanation & Discussion:

After explaining the characteristics of the Vyavahäräbhäsi Shrimad now turns to the Nishchayäbhäsi. The term Nishchay Naya has been explained at the beginning of this chapter. It means absolute point of view. There are scriptures like Samaysär, which have been written from that angle. They describe the inherent purity of soul that cannot be corrupted. If one understands it in right perspective, such books are very helpful in gaining spiritual elevation. But if they are read without enough background to understand the absolute point of view, such people might assume that the soul is pure, immutable and incorruptible. As such, they would consider devotion, detachment, restraints, etc. as unnecessary and would tend to give them up.

Nishchay Naya is meant for the aspirants who have reached a high level of spiritual development. It is meant for realizing the true nature of soul. If this is not kept in view, the knowledge of soul would remain only at the superficial level. The state of a person, who realizes the purity of soul, would undergo radical change. Thereafter it would be hard for him to indulge in any type of defilement or infatuation. Resorting to absolute purity of soul without adequate spiritual background is thus fraught with danger. That can lead to Nishchayäbhäs and would induce the people to give up sound religious

practices, which are helpful in spiritual pursuit. They thus stay bereft of the wholesome means like devotion, detachment, restraints, etc. By unduly resorting to the absolute viewpoint a sectarian thus stays deprived of the vital means of spiritual progress.

Jnänadashä Päme Nahin, Sädhandashä Na Känyi;
Päme Teno Sang Je, Te Boode havamänhi.

He does not attain the state of enlightenment, nor is he equipped with the means thereof; one who comes in contact with him gets drowned in the sea of worldly existence. (30)

Explanation & Discussion:

Acquiring knowledge is not the end of spiritual pursuit. It is merely a beginning. The objective should be to attain the state of enlightenment, and that cannot be attained without using the scriptural knowledge for changing the internal tendencies. The restraints and austerities are meant to help in the process of changing the internal tendencies in light of the true nature of soul. Since a Nishchayäbhäsi exclusively resorts to the absolute viewpoint, his understanding stays mostly at the verbal level. He tends to ignore the importance of detachment and other wholesome aspects and stays deprived of the right means for spiritual development.

Staying thus devoid of enlightenment as well as of the right means, the sectarian remains far away from the path of liberation and stays engulfed in the vicious cycle of birth and death. But a Nishchayäbhäsi may be able to talk very well; he might attract many people by his apparently strong logic. The unsuspecting people, who get attracted, may be induced to adopt his one-sided view. Thus they also become vulnerable to get drowned in the sea of worldly existence.

E Pan Jiv Matärthamän, Nij Mänädi Käj;
Päme Nahin Paramärthane, An-adhikärimän Ja.

The bare knowledgeable also remains sectarian on account of his ego, etc; he does not get on the right path and stays unworthy (of liberation). (31)

Explanation & Discussion:

It was pointed out in stanza 28 that while observing restraints etc. the lifeless ritualist cherishes the ego of being called a devotee. The same logic applies to a bare knowledgeable. Such a person cherishes the ego of being called knowledgeable. If he accepts the truth, he has to admit that he was on the wrong path. That would hurt his ego. In order to preserve the ego he shuns the right path and remains conceited. That is a wrong approach; it is Mithyätva. The bare knowledgeable person thus remains unworthy of liberation.

This is mainly on account of undue insistence on absolute viewpoint. He does not realize that a Naya presents only a viewpoint. It can be right from some perspective, but at best it is a relative truth. In order to arrive at the overall truth one needs to take into consideration all the viewpoints. The truth thus lies in combination of absolute (Nishchay Naya) and practical (Vyavhär Naya) points of view. That is Anekäntväd, or multiplicity of viewpoints. It gives due importance to partial truth and constitutes the Jain theory of relativity. Resorting to only one viewpoint is Ekänt, which leads to an illusory conclusion. Such one-sided viewpoint

cannot be true, nor can it lead to truth. This stanza therefore states that those, who exclusively insist on Nishchay Naya, are Ekänti. They are far from the truth and cannot be considered as treading on the right path.

Nahi Kashäy Upashäntatä, Nahi Antar Vairägya;
Saralpanun Na Madhyasthatä, E Matärthi Durbhägya.

*Unfortunate is the sectarian, who has not calmed down the passions, does not have inner detachment, and is neither straightforward nor impartial. (3*2)

Explanation & Discussion:

The spiritual level of an aspirant is governed by the presence of certain attributes, which a sectarian does not have. In order to avoid the sectarian approach one should know those attributes. This stanza describes four principal attributes, which a spiritual aspirant must hold and which a sectarian does not possess.

The first is pacification or calming down of defilement. Anger, ego, deception, and greed are the main defiling instincts that need to be calmed down; but a sectarian does not heed to that aspect on account of insistence on his own viewpoint. The second is internal detachment, which a sectarian cannot cultivate because of the same reason. The third is straightforwardness, which can come forth by overcoming vanity, deception, etc. The fourth is impartial attitude, which comes from an open mind. Only an open-minded person remains receptive; that enables him to dispassionately evaluate different viewpoints. Dispassionateness is thus the antithesis of sectarianism. As such, a sectarian fails to resort to it.

It would be easy to understand that one, who calms down the defilement, does not stay attached to the worldly aspects. Detachment is thus implied in a calmed-down state. Similarly straightforwardness and impartiality flow from such a state. Calming of defilement thus brings forth other attributes. Since a sectarian does not possess these attributes, he cannot undertake true spiritual pursuit. As such, he continues to move in the worldly cycle of birth and death.

Lakshan Kahyän Matärthinän, Matärtha Jävä Käj;
Have Kahun Ätmärthinän, Ätma-artha Sukhasäj.

The characteristics of the sectarian have been stated in order to avert them; now I am describing those of the truth seeker for the sake of spiritual bliss. (33)

Explanation & Discussion:

The description of sectarian people ends here. It is not meant to put down any one. The purpose is to show the drawbacks of sectarianism, so that the aspirants can avoid the same and come to the right path. This is done impartially and out of compassion.

If one avoids the sectarian approach, he can turn to the right way of seeking truth. The characteristics of such truth seekers are laid in the next chapter. Its purpose is to draw the attention of the aspirants towards the path of bliss. The bliss is inherent within the soul, but it is not manifested at present. If one cultivates the attributes of truth seekers, he would be enabled to resort to the means of attaining the lasting bliss.

Chapter 3: Characteristics of Truth Seekers

The characteristics of sectarian people as given in the last chapter are meant to enable one to give up the sectarian approach. Now this chapter gives those of truth seekers by resorting to which one can pursue the objective of attaining the bliss. Truth seekers are those, who are interested in gaining self-realization. The term used in the text for such people is Ätmärthi, which literally means one who seeks the well being of his soul.

The worldly soul has been wandering, because it has never conceived of its true well being. It is, of course, interested in gaining happiness. For that purpose, however, it looks to the worldly sources, which are incapable to provide true happiness. When one realizes that happiness lies within and cannot be gained by looking out, he would turn inward. Such turning indicates that he is intent upon seeking the truth. In other words, he has now been oriented towards the true well being.

Ätmajnän Tyän Munipanun, Te Sächä Guru Hoy;
Bäki Kulguru Kalpanä, Ätmärthi Nahin Joy.

Monasticism abides in *self-realization; they are the true Gurus;*
a truth seeker does not have any fancy about the family priests. (34)

Explanation & Discussion:
Since truth needs to be sought from a true Guru, this chapter starts with the concept of Guru. The monks and nuns are usually treated as Gurus, but how can we identify a true one? We come across many monks, but every one cannot be resorted to as a Guru. Five attributes of a true Guru were specified in stanza 10. Of those five, the attribute of self-realization is the first and foremost. It is therefore said here that true monasticism abides in self-realization. Ächäräng Sutra (1-5-3) also states: "Jam Sammanti Päsah Tam Monanti Päsah." It means that monasticism abides where there is right perception. The right perception is thus considered an essential attribute for monasticism.

Only self-realized persons therefore need to be acknowledged as true Gurus. While specifying the characteristics of sectarian people it was pointed out in stanza 24 that there are people, who attach importance to family priests, even though such priests may not have any concept of self-realization. But the truth seekers have no fancy for them. They look for true Gurus. The truth seekers do not have any consideration for the family priests or for the sectarian ones.

Pratyaksha Sadguru Präptino, Gane Param Upakär;
Trane Yog Ekatvathi, Varte Äjnädhär.

Considering the direct access to a true Guru as supremely beneficial one would act on his precepts with the united energy of body, speech, and mind. (35)

Explanation & Discussion

When we look at the characteristics of a true Guru as specified in stanza 10, it would be obvious that it is hard to have access to such a Guru. If one therefore gets such access, he should consider it supremely beneficial. In spiritual pursuit there is no other means that could be as helpful as a live Guru. The benefits that can be derived from such a Guru are not comparable to those derived from any other source.

The worldly soul has been wandering mainly on account of unavailability of a true Guru. If one had gained the access to such a Guru, his wandering would have come to the end. The worldly soul has stayed ignorant of the path of liberation since the infinity. That ignorance cannot be removed by one's own efforts. Shrimad has therefore said (Vachanämrut # 198):

"The worldly soul can in no way get to the truth on his own accord. Only on getting access to a live Guide one can get to the truth; he can make it out. He gets on the path of truth and his attention stays towards it. Whatever is done without the direction from an enlightened person leads to the bondage."

Much emphasis has thus been laid on importance of enlightened Guru in spiritual pursuit, because the problems that one cannot solve by reading scriptures, etc. can be easily resolved by such a Guru. In this connection Shrimad has said (Vachanämrut # 200), "The instructions given in the scriptures are indiscernible and are meant for making the soul worthy. For liberation one needs to resort to the evident directions of the enlightened personages."

Moreover, the worldly soul has been living oblivious of his faults. Those faults cannot be removed unless they are brought to the notice. True Guru can see such faults and bring them to the attention of the aspirant. He can also bring to the notice the pitfalls lying on the way so that the aspirant can remain cautious during his spiritual pursuit. Getting access to a true Guru thus needs to be considered as unique.

As such, if one comes in contact with such a Guru, he should consider himself fortunate and should surrender to him with all his energy. He needs to stay in total obedience to him. Physical, vocal, and mental are the faculties with which one makes any type of endeavor. The true endeavor consists of exercising all those faculties in staying obedient to the Guru.

The ignorance of the worldly soul can be equated to darkness. That cannot be removed without getting a lamp in the form of enlightened Guide. In this connection Shrimad has said (Vachanämrut # 211), "If darkness is divided into various grades, none of them can resemble the light." Similarly none of the concepts of the worldly soul, who has been groping in dark, can be true or close to truth. One cannot thus get on the path of liberation by his own efforts. It is necessary to get the guidance from a self-realized Guru. That can happen only by surrendering to such a Guru and by carrying out all his commands, explicit as well as implicit.

Ek Hoy Tran Kälamän, Paramärathano Panth;
Prere Te Paramärthane, Te Vyavahär Samant.

*There is only one path of supreme bliss for all the time; the practice that leads to that bliss is worth adopting. (*36)

Explanation & Discussion:

Since supreme bliss lies in the state of liberation, the truth seeker needs to resort to the path of liberation. That path remains the same all throughout. In this connection Shrimad has said (Vachanämrut # 54), "There are no different paths for liberation. All those, who have attained the supreme bliss of liberation in the past, had done it by pursuing one single path…. There is no difference of opinion about the path. That path is easy; it is the path of bliss, it is steady and prevails forever. No one has gained liberation without making out the secret of that path."

Though the path of liberation is thus the same for all the time and at all places, it happens to be laid in differing terms. For instance, Tattvärtha Sutra (I-1) states: "Samyagdarshanjnänchäriträni Mokshamärgah". It means that the path of liberation consists of right perception, right knowledge, and right conduct. Another scripture states: "Jnänkriyäbhyäm Mokshah", which means that the liberation can be attained by knowledge and practice. On the face of it, the two sutras would look different. But there is actually no difference. The difference between the two appears because the second sutra takes perception as implicit in knowledge. As such, the difference is only apparent. It is the scriptural style to put the same thing in different words for the sake of emphasis.

The absolute and practical viewpoints were explained earlier. They are not at variance with each other. This stanza gives equal importance to both of them. The first line relates to the absolute viewpoint, which focuses on the ultimate truth. From that point of view it is said that there is one single path for attaining liberation. That path consists of knowing the soul, being convinced of its existence, and staying in tune with its nature. That is the path of liberation; it does not vary from time to time or from place to place and remains constant.

The different theologies, however, lay the path of liberation differently. For instance, Vedänt lays one path, while Buddhism lays another. That happens on account of viewing the same objective from different perspectives. The second line of the stanza therefore states that the activity, which leads to the ultimate objective, needs to be adopted as the right practice. That is the practical viewpoint.

So long as one stays embodied, his physical, verbal and mental faculties are going to function. They need to be exercised in a way that helps in proceeding towards the ultimate objective. Devotion, worship, scriptural study, austerities, forbearance etc. are the activities that can be helpful in this respect, if undertaken while keeping the ultimate objective in view. In the above-said letter # 54 Shrimad has therefore said, "The omniscient Lords have laid thousands of rituals and precepts to point out the path. Those rituals and precepts are fruitful if they are adopted with a view to proceeding on that path; they are futile if they are resorted to while forsaking that path."

Em Vichäri Antare, Shodhe Sadguru Yog;
Käm Ek Ätmärthanun, Bijo Nahin Manrog.

Thinking as such, one seeks access to a true Guru; Self-realization is his only aspiration; his mind knows no other ailment. (38)

Explanation & Discussion:
Once the truth seeker makes out what needs to be done for gaining the lasting bliss and realizes the importance of a true Guru in pursuing that objective, he would start

seeking such a Guru. He knows that the faults lying within him can be removed by the grace of a true Guru. Since his well being thus lies in access to a true Guru, he remains eager to come across such a Guru. He does not remain concerned with any other aspect. By virtue of his advancement on the spiritual path he may get respect and devotion from others, but the truth seeker would not give any importance to that and would remain indifferent to all such aspects. If he gets elated thereby, he would miss the objective of gaining true well being.

Shrimad has repeatedly emphasized the importance of getting a Guru. In Vachanämrut # 76 he has written: "Do not seek anything else. Find out only one enlightened person and conduct yourself by surrendering every thing at his feet. If you do not attain liberation thereby, take it from me. Enlightened is he, who stays continually soul-oriented, whose words can come to the experiential level, even though they are not available in the scriptures or nor heard anywhere else, and whose life style does not betray any expectation even at the innermost level."

Therefore if one wants his true well being, he must channel all his efforts in locating a true Guru. All other desires and longings like worldly respect, family life, wealth, and even the well being of body must be subordinated to the main goal of finding a true Guru. Anything that does not lead to the well being of soul needs to be treated as a disease. As we stay away from the disease, the truth seeker should avoid all the worldly aspects. He should not be inclined towards any of them.

Kashäyani Upashäntatä, Matra Moksha Abhiläsh;
Bhave Khed, Pränidayä, Tyän Ätmärtha Niväs.

The state of truth-seeking arises when defiling instincts are calmed down, liberation remains the only aspiration, there prevails disaffection for the life cycle, and there is compassion for all living beings. (38)

Explanation & Discussion:

The scriptures specify the following five factors as the requisites for truth seekers: (1) Sham (calming down or pacifying of defilements), (2) Samveg (exclusively aspiring for liberation,), (3) Nirved (disaffection for worldly life), (4) Anukampä (compassion), and (5) Ästhä (faith). Of these, first four are specified in this stanza as the characteristics of a truth seeker. The fifth is not mentioned, because it is implicit in first four. Let us consider those four factors at some length.

Sham: Anger, ego, deceit, and greed are the four main types of defilement that keep the worldly soul bound to the cycle of birth and death. In Jain terminology they are known as Kashäys. The spiritual pursuit mainly consists of overcoming these Kashäys. It is, of course, not easy to do so, because the worldly soul has been used to indulge in Kashäys since the infinite time. They can, however, be calmed down by cultivating the opposite attributes. For instance, anger can be pacified by forgiving, ego by modesty, deception by straightforwardness, and greed by contentment. Such calming down of Kashäys is called Sham.

Samveg: The worldly life is beset with longings, desires, and aspirations. Every one harbors various types of longings, desires erc. If any of them remains unfulfilled, the soul will have to take new birth in a place where its desires are likely to be fulfilled.

The life cycle thus continues as long as one harbors any desire. The soul has to continue wandering until it gives up all worldly desires and aspires only for liberation. Such exclusive aspiration for liberation is called Samveg.

Nirved: The worldly soul has always remained attached to sense objects and has been trying to get happiness by fancying pleasure therein. It has never realized that lifeless objects have no capability to provide happiness. Attachment to the worldly objects can be relinquished at ease, when one realizes that the worldly life is beset with misery. Thereby he loses interest in seeking the worldly comforts and sensual pleasures. In other words, one gets disaffected of the worldly life. Such disaffection is called Nirved.

Anukampä: During its wandering since the time immemorial the worldly man has thought of his own comforts and happiness, and for maintaining the same he has not hesitated even from hurting other living beings. When one turns introvert, he makes out that every being wants to live happily and does not like to be disturbed in its quest for happiness. Thereby one feels that he should not hurt other beings. Moreover, he also realizes that every living being has an identical soul, which is destined to attain liberation. As such, he learns to respect each and every being. If any of them is in trouble or afflicted, his heart would grieve for its sake. Such compassion is called Anukampä.

When an aspirant has developed these attributes, he is considered a truth seeker. He can therefore proceed in search of truth.

Dashä Na Evi Jyän Sudhi, Jiv Lahe Nahin Jog;
Mokshamarga Päme Nahin, Mate Na Antar Rog.

So long as one does not reach that state, he does not get the path of liberation; and his internal disease cannot be cured. (39)

Explanation & Discussion:

The factors mentioned in the last stanza are the requisites for all truth seekers. Their ultimate objective is to attain liberation. For that purpose one has to get worthy of gaining the liberation. Those, who deserve it and endeavor for the same are called Mumukshu (Liberation seekers). Shrimad has defined (Vachanämrut # 254) that term as 'being disgusted of all sorts of delusive attachment and endeavoring exclusively for liberation.'

So long as one does not hold the above mentioned requisites, he cannot get on the path of liberation; he does not make out the significance of getting liberated and hence does not strive for it. In other words, he does not deserve to tread on that path. It is therefore obvious that a liberation-seeker cannot afford to harbor any type of defilement. If he cannot entirely overcome the defiling instincts, he should at least calm them down. Similarly without having aspiration for liberation no one would strive for it. For that purpose one needs to have disaffection for the worldly wandering. Such liberation seeker must also have compassion for all the living beings.

In absence of those attributes one cannot develop the receptivity of mind. As such, he cannot derive the benefit from the teaching of a Guru. The Guru also knows that his teaching would not be effective unless the person has receptivity. He would not

therefore like to waste his energy over the undeserving pupil. Moreover, the true Gurus are not easily available, because they prefer to stay away from the worldly surroundings. One, who is not a truth seeker, is therefore not likely to get access to such a Guru and if he happens to get the access, he would not be able to grasp the Guru's teaching.

It was made clear in the first chapter that no one can get on the path of liberation without proper guidance. One, who does not satisfy the above mentioned criteria, stays bereft of the right guidance. As such, he stays far from the path of liberation and continues to wander in the cycle of birth and death. Such wandering is the long-lasting disease with which the worldly soul has been afflicted. Other diseases do not last so long. Even if there is an incurable disease, it disappears with the end of the life. The worldly wandering, however, continues from birth to birth and seems to be unending. That disease cannot be cured so long as the aspirant remains unworthy and does not secure guidance from a true Guru.

Äve Jyän Evi Dashä, Sadguru Bodh Suhäy;
Te Bodhe Suvichäranä, Tyän Pragate Sukhadäy.

When that state is reached, the teaching of the true Guru shines out (fructifies); and the blissful right thinking emerges from that teaching. (40)

Explanation & Discussion:

It’s not that that the worldly soul might have never thought of its well being. The true well being, however, lies within, not without. The worldly soul has remained extrovert so far. It would not be possible for it to conceive of the nature of true well being, unless one gets right guidance from a self-realized Guru. The stanza 39 has shown how one could stay unworthy of treading on the path of liberation. This stanza states how a deserving one could proceed on that path. One, who satisfies the criteria stipulated in stanza 38, is in a position to think correctly and his mind remains inclined towards the Guru's teaching. When the Guru comes across such a deserving pupil, he is pleased to show the path that can lead to the lasting happiness.

Since Guru’s teaching is capable to penetrate the heart, the pupil is able to grasp and comprehend it. That is termed here as shining of Guru’s teaching. Such teaching pertains to various aspects like detachment, renouncement, compassion, equanimity, self-reflection, etc. which are helpful in gaining self realization. But the emphasis rests on the everlasting nature of soul and impermanence of every worldly aspect. As one learns that he is the everlasting soul, he is induced to think about his true well being. That itself constitutes right thinking. Such thinking becomes helpful in leading towards self-realization.

Jyän Pragate Suvichäranä, Tyän Pragate Nij Jnän;
Je Jnäne Kshay Moh Thai, Päme Pad Nirvän.

Knowledge of Self gets manifested with the emergence of right thinking; and getting rid of the delusion with the enlightenment one attains liberation. (41)

Explanation & Discussion:

What makes the worldly soul wander? It is mainly due to absence of right thinking. The worldly soul has always identified itself with the embodiment that it gets from time to time. That is its delusion, which pertains to perception as well as behavior. When one gets guidance from a true Guru, he can make out that his true nature is different from all sorts of worldly aspects. That enables him to ponder over the true nature of soul and its potential to attain total purity. Thereby he overcomes the perception related delusion and gains the right perception. In Jain terminology that is called Samyag Darshan.

At that stage the aspirant gets the glimpse of bliss, which is inherent within the soul. Once he reaches that stage, his thinking, interest, attitude etc. undergo radical change. He starts losing attachment for every worldly aspect and tries to remain tuned to soul. He also tries to observe restraints so as to overcome the defiling instincts and gains internal purity to an ever increasing extent.

One generally stays with the delusion due to the ignorance about his true nature. As the perception becomes purer, he realizes that the deluded behavior is not his nature. Some delusion may prevail on account of the previous Karma, but he tries to overcome the same by vigilantly and repeatedly pondering over the nature of soul. Eventually he succeeds in overcoming the behavior-related delusion also. Therefore the stanza states that the delusion is destroyed by virtue of enlightenment. Thereby one reaches the delusion-free state. The remaining obscuring and obstructing Karmas are destroyed at that stage and one attains the state of omniscience. That state continues to prevail in that lifetime. At the end he rises to the state of liberation, which is mentioned here as Nirvän.

Upaje Te Suvichäranä, Mokshamärga Samajäy;
Gurushishya Samvädathi, Bhäkhun Shatpad Änhi

The path of liberation can be comprehended with the emergence of right thinking; the six Fundamentals relating to that path are laid hereunder in the form of dialogue between the preceptor and the pupil. (42)

Explanation & Discussion:

This is the concluding stanza of this chapter. The reader might have noticed that all the phases of spiritual pursuit have been briefly described in this chapter. Emergence of right thinking is the most crucial phase. Its importance has been stressed by Shrimad (Vachanämrut # 569) in the following words.

“Self-realization is the only way to get rid of all types of misery and unhappiness. Self-realization cannot arise without thinking; and it is doubtless that thinking ability of the worldly soul has been hampered due to the unwholesome contacts and unwholesome conditions.” When one gets the the guidance from a true Guru, he shrugs off the indolence and earnestly strives to get on the path of liberation.

Shrimad knows that the pupil is a genuine truth seeker. He is therefore willing to show the path. But he thinks that instead of directly describing the path, it would be better to show it in the form of a dialogue between a pupil and a preceptor. That pattern enables one to anticipate the problems and doubts arising to the spiritual aspirants and to give satisfying answers. That also creates interest among truth

seekers and the explanation becomes more comprehensible. The essence of truth was revealed by Lord Mahavir to Gautamswämi in that way.

Moreover, the pupil conceived of here is Ätmärthi, who is not going to ask the questions for the sake of mere curiosity. He is the real truth seeker, who is going to present the issues that a seeker genuinely comes across during his search for truth. His purpose would be to get them clarified so that he can pursue the path of liberation with confidence. He also knows that the preceptor is enlightened and is in a position to give satisfactory replies to all his questions.

Chapter 4 Statement of Six Fundamentals

Treading on the path of liberation involves a long journey. One has to advance on that path step by step. That advance can be compared to climbing on a ladder of elevation. Jainism conceives of such a ladder with 14 rungs. They are called Gunasthänaks, meaning the stages of elevation. The initial three stages consist of wrong or semi-wrong perception. During those stages an aspirant is below the level of a truth seeker. Right perception emerges in the 4th stage. The real spiritual advancement thus starts from that stage. Every activity, including the acute austerities, is therefore considered futile in absence of right perception. Since the aspirant is still not in a position to observe restraints at the 4th stage, it is termed as the stage of right perception without restraints.

While explaining the characteristics of truth seekers given in the last chapter, it was mentioned that the description therein presents the step by step advancement till the emergence of right thinking. By virtue of such thinking one is induced to think of six Fundamental aspects relating to soul. Unwavering faith in those six Fundamentals constitutes the right perception as mentioned in the Letter of Six Fundamentals (Appendix-II) addressed to Laghuräjswämi.

Some people would contend that those Fundamentals are not found in Jain tradition; they have never even heard of them. As such, they fail to make out from where they have been brought forth. It would therefore be pertinent to point out that they are from the ancient scriptures. Of the original 12 scriptures, the last one, Drashtiväd, has been lost since more than 2000 years. But from its description in Samaväyäng and other texts, it is learnt that it contained 14 Poorvas. The 7th Poorva was termed as Ätmapraväd. These six Fundamentals deal with the subject matter of that Poorva. They were described by Ächärya Siddhasen Diwäkar in Sanmati Prakaran about 1800 years ago. Comparatively recently they were included in Sadsathbolani Sajzäy by the learned Upädhyäy Shri Yashovijayji.

The existence of soul, its permanence, its indulgence in Karma, bearing of consequences, state of liberation and the method of attaining the same constitute the six Fundamentals. They are closely related to Nav Tattva comprising Jiv, Ajiv, Punya, Päp, Äsrav, Bandh, Samvar, Nirjarä, and Moksha. Jiv (soul) denotes a living being. Its animation subsists by virtue of its consciousness. Everything else that does not have consciousness is inanimate, which means Ajiv. As Kartä (doer, actuator) of its Karma, a soul acquires Punya (wholesome Karma) or Päp (unwholesome Karma). The incoming of Karma is Äsrav. Bearing the consequences of Karma implies that there is bondage (Bandh) of Karma. The liberation is Moksha and the means thereof are Samvar (Prevention of Karma) and Nirjarä (Eradication of Karma). No one should therefore remain under the apprehension that Shrimad might have brought these six Fundamentals from nowhere. As a matter of fact, by explaining the same simply and logically, he has brought to light the path of liberation, which was lying unexplored since long.

These six Fundamentals form the basis of Jainism. In this respect Shrimad has written (Vachanämrut # 493, vide appendix II): "The enlightened persons have given the instructions of these six Fundamentals in order to remove the sense of ego and attachment

arising from the dreaming state of the worldly soul that has been prevailing since the time without beginning....The discernment arising from these six Fundamentals is meant to enable the soul to realize its true Self."

`Ätmä Chhe', `Te Nitya Chhe', `Chhe Kartä Nijkarma'; `Chhe Bhoktä', Vali 'Moksha Chhe', ` Moksha Upäy Sudharma'.

Soul exists, it is eternal, it is Kartä of its own Karma, it bears the consequences, also there is liberation and the means of liberation constitute true religion. (43)

Explanation & Discussion:

The first Fundamental asserts the existence of soul. That assertion is very vital. The existence of soul makes the spiritual pursuit meaningful. If there is no soul, the question of spiritual pursuit would not arise. Many people tend to believe that soul does not exist. They contend that the existence merely consists of the physical body and brain, and that is produced by procreation or by division of cells. The invalidity of this contention will be explained later. Here it is enough to assert the existence of soul.

The second Fundamental states that soul is eternal. That assertion is meant to overcome the contention of the non-believers. Most of them do not dispute the liveliness of all animate beings, but they contend that such liveliness arises at the time of birth and disappears at the time of death. As such, it is not eternal and does not last forever. Till recently the people with scientific approach used to hold such beliefs. The trend, however, seems to be changing and many scientists, including some well known neurologists, have started believing that there has to be something beyond the body and the brain.

The third Fundamental states that soul is the Kartä (actuator) of its Karma. This is primarily stated while keeping in mind the worldly state. We happen to get in different situations; some of them are favorable and some unfavorable. We are used to experience a sense of pleasure and happiness with the favorable situations and a sense of pain and unhappiness by the unfavorable ones. In reality, no situation is capable of giving happiness or unhappiness. We are merely used to react to the different situations with the sense of craving or aversion. That reaction results in acquisition of Karma. We ourselves are thus responsible for that bondage.

The fourth Fundamental states that soul bears the consequences. The Karma that the worldly soul acquires stays with it and gives its consequences at the appropriate time. Such consequences arise in the form of various situations like the kind of species in which they are born, type of body and its surroundings etc. Different situations thus occur from time to time depending upon the type of Karmas that become operative. In those situations the worldly soul reacts with either craving or aversion and thereby it acquires new Karma. The worldly cycle thus continues to operate.

The fifth Fundamental states that there is liberation. It means freedom from the bondage of Karma. Since no situation stays forever, one should accept the given situations as consequences of his own Karma and should bear the same with equanimity without indulging in the sense of likes or dislikes. In that case one would not acquire new

Karma. Since old Karmas automatically fall off after their fruition, the soul eventually can become Karmaless. That is the state of liberation, which should be the ultimate objective of every one.

The sixth Fundamental states that there is a way to attain liberation and resorting to that mode constitutes the religion. The principal role of religion is thus to lead the worldly soul towards liberation. The purpose of composing this Ätmasiddhi Shästra is to show that path. It was therefore stated in the second stanza that the path of liberation, which stands mostly forsaken at present, has been explicitly described here.

Every religion purports to show the right path for its followers. Some of them, however, have no concept of liberation. They do talk of salvation, but equate it with gaining the pleasure of an Almighty or some other deity, and enjoying the situation that He might extend by virtue of His pleasure. Such a state is termed as heavenly happiness. No state can, however, continue forever. It is conceivable that a time may come, when one would lose the favor of the Almighty. In that case He would throw him out and extend the appropriate punishment!

Jainism does not subscribe to such a salvation. It conceives of the state of ultimate liberation from which one does not have to come back. That is a perfectly blissful, eternal state. The liberated soul has not to take a new birth and stays forever in that blissful state. This concept is not aristocratic in the sense of restricting it for only a few selected souls. It is fully democratic. Not only does it state that every soul is equal, but also states that every soul has the potentiality to attain liberation. What needs to be done is to realize that potentiality and to manifest the true nature of soul. All sorts of spiritual pursuit are meant for that purpose.

Shatsthänak Sankshepamän, Shat Darshan Pan Teh;
Samajävä Paramärthane, Kahyän Jnänie Eh.

These are the six steps (Fundamentals) in brief and they also constitute the six schools of thought; the enlightened persons have described them in order to elucidate the ultimate truth. (44)

Explanation & Discussion:

These six Fundamentals constitute the six steps on the path of liberation, which need to be treaded one by one. First of all one has to believe in the existence of soul. When no doubt remains about it, he needs to consider that the soul is eternal; it is indestructible and stays forever. After being convinced of it he would conceive of its continually acquiring Karma and realize how it has been undergoing birth after birth as a consequence. Thereby one would think of reaching the Karmaless state so as to be free from the cycle of birth and death. Then he needs to consider how to gain that Karmaless state and resort to the path thereof.

These six Fundamentals also constitute the six main ideologies or six schools of thought prevailing in the spiritual realm. They are collectively called Shaddarshan. Shad means six and Darshan means the ideological schools of thought. Those six schools are presented differently by different people. The Vedäntist consider only those schools

which are based on the Veds. Sänkhya, Yog, Poorva Mimänsä, Uttar Mimänsä, Nyäy, and Vaisheshik are such six schools.

The list obviously keeps Jainism and Buddhism out, because they do not subscribe to Veds. In order to accommodate them the schools are mentioned a bit differently. Since Nyäy and Vaisheshik schools have much in common, they are grouped together under the title Naiyäyik. Similarly Poorva Mimänsä and Uttar Mimänsä are grouped together under the title Vedänt. The six schools then consist of Sänkhya, Yog, Vedänt, Naiyäyik, Jainism, and Buddhism.

All these schools have the same common objective of liberation. The differences arise on account of differing concepts about the creation, creator, soul, and liberation. Sänkhya, Jainism and Buddhism, for instance, do not believe in the creation of the world, while other schools believe in creation and a creator. Sänkhya, Yog, Naiyäyik, and Jainism believe in endless number of individual souls. Vedänt believes in one single soul. Buddhism does not believe in the existence of everlasting soul. Such differences arise, because most of the people tend to think from their own perspective. Jainism takes into consideration all possible perspectives. The six Fundamentals mentioned here present the synthesis of all the different viewpoints. It is therefore said in this stanza that those Fundamentals constitute the six ideologies.

Some people like to accommodate even the atheist belief of Chärväk within the framework of six schools. For that purpose they group Sänkhya and Yog together, because their approach is more or less similar and treat Sänkhya, Naiyäyik, Vedänt, Jainism, Buddhism and Chärväk as six schools of thought. In the Stavan (Adoration song) of Naminäth, the 21st Tirthankar, the great philosopher-poet-monk Änandghanji has treated Sänkhya, Yog, Buddhism, Mimänsä, Chärväk, and Jainism as the six schools and has presented a unique way of synthesizing them.

Änandghanji conceives of the detached Lord as personifying the spiritual realm and treats those six schools as constituting different limbs of the Lord. The concept of Sänkhya and Yog about the soul is somewhat analogous to the Jain concept. They are therefore treated as constituting two feet of the Lord. Mimänsä (which is the same as Vedänt) believes in one single eternal soul, while Buddhism believes in ever-changing states. Thus they represent the Jain beliefs from substantial (Dravyärthic) and variable (Paryäyärthic) points of view. From the Dravyärthic point of view all souls are identical. As such, they can be treated as one single unit. That concept is analogous to the Vaidic belief of only one Brahman pervading everywhere. From the Paryäyärthic point of view, however, every soul continues to assume a new state from time to time. That concept is analogous to the Buddhist concept of ever-changing states. Mimänsä and Buddhism are therefore treated as constituting two arms of the Lord. Chärväk is treated as representing the stomach of the Lord. The stomach accepts different types of food, but it distributes the same to various limbs and does not keep anything with it. Similarly, Chärväk took into consideration all the theories about the soul, but did not adopt any of them. His view is therefore comparable to the stomach.

The last one, Jainism, represents the head, which is the highest limb of the Lord. In order to justify that status, the Stavan ends with the following summarization.

Jinvaramän Saghalä Darshan Chhe,
Darshane Jinvar Bhajanä Re;
Sägarmän Saghali Tatinä Sahi,
Tatinimän Sägar Bhajanä Re.

It means: All the schools of thought are covered within the school of the omniscient Lord, while the Lord's concept may or may not be covered in a particular school. This is comparable to the sea and a river. All rivers flow into the sea, while the flowing of sea-water into the mouth of a river may or may not occur.

Änandghanji attributes the highest status to Jainism, not because he was a Jain monk. Jainism stands the highest, because it presents the whole truth after taking into consideration all the viewpoints; it synthesizes all of them. This will be clear from the questions and answers that are going to follow. It will be seen that the pupil presents all possible questions that have been raised by different viewpoints and the Guru gives satisfying replies from the right viewpoint. The pupil is the real truth seeker, and Guru’s replies to his questions put his doubts to rest. It is therefore said here that these six Fundamentals have been described for elucidating the ultimate truth.

Chapter 5 Pupil's First Doubt regarding the existence of Soul

The questioning session starts from this chapter. Let us remember here that the pupil is genuinely interested in seeking the truth. He is aware of the six Fundamentals, and he seriously intends to undertake the spiritual pursuit on that basis. But there are some doubts in his mind about the existence of soul and he wants to remove them. He knows that only an enlightened person can clarify the points that bother him. He therefore approaches the Guru and presents his doubts to him. His first doubt pertains to the existence of soul. As regard its existence Shrimad has observed as under in the Letter of six Fundamentals (Appendix II).

"As there is existence of physical objects like pot, cloth, etc. so is there the existence of soul. As the properties of pot, cloth, etc. provide the evidence of their existence, so the obvious property of consciousness to manifest itself and to know others is the evidence of existence of soul." The pupil presents the following questions in that respect.

Nathi Drashtimän Ävato, Nathi Janätun Roop;
Bijo Pan Anubhav Nahin, Tethi Na Jiv Swaroop.

It does not come within the sight, its form is not seen, nor does it come to the experiential level; therefore there is no such thing as soul. (45)

Explanation & Discussion:

It will be noticed that the pupil here raises certain basic questions, which could arise to any thinking person. He has learnt that perceiving, knowing and experiencing are the principal attributes of soul. His doubts are centered on those attributes. Perception implies visibility. Most of the worldly objects are visible. Our knowledge therefore generally rests on what we see. If something is not visible, we usually remain ignorant of it; if one tells us about its existence, we remain doubtful about it.

The pupil doubts about the existence of soul, because it is not visible. Moreover, it is not possible to know it by any other means, because no form is attributed to it. The pupil argues that even if the soul is accepted as formless and shapeless and hence invisible to the eyes, it should be experienced by some other organ. We should be able to experience it by touch, taste, smell, etc. Since it is not experienced by any organ, how can it be identified, and how is it possible to believe in its existence without identification? The pupil therefore argues that these are the reasons to think that the soul does not exist.

Athavä Deh Ja Ätmä, Athavä Indriya prän,
Mithyä Judo Mänavo, Nahin Judun Endhän.

Or call the body itself as soul, or call it as senses or the breath; it is wrong to believe it is distinct, because there is no differentiating sign. (46)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil continues his arguments. After pointing out the invisibility of soul, he argues that if there is something that can be termed as soul, it should be the same as the body. We notice that a live body eats, drinks, walks, thinks, and undertakes other activities. Since all such activities are the signs of life, the pupil argues that the living body can be termed as soul. Then while thinking about the knowing capability he remembers that knowledge is gained by different sense organs. We touch by skin, taste by tongue, smell by nose, see with eyes, and hear through ears. These sense organs are therefore the channels for knowing. If any of them stops working, knowledge pertaining to that sense is blocked. For instance, if one loses eyesight, he is unable to see. The pupil therefore argues that the sense organs can be termed as soul.

Then the pupil's attention turns to breathing. Even if a man loses the vitality of every sense organ, he is still considered alive so long as respiration continues. The breath is thus an infallible sign of life. Therefore he suggests that respiration can be termed as soul. According to his arguments, the soul can therefore be equated with body or senses or breath. Since there appears no sign of soul apart from these three aspects, the pupil argues that it would be meaningless to talk of its existence as different from these three aspects.

Vali Jo Ätmä Hoy To, Janäy Te Nahi Kem?
Janäy Jo Te Hoy To, Ghat Pat Ädi Jem.

*Moreover, if there is a soul, why is it not noticed? If it is there, it should be noticed like a pot or cloth. (*47)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil further elaborates his argument against the existence of soul. The existence is normally associated with tangibility. An object comes to our knowledge by virtue of its tangibility. In spiritual discussion pot and cloth are taken as representatives of tangible objects. The pupil makes use of that metaphor and argues that if the soul exists, we should be able to notice it like a pot or cloth.

This argument is based on visibility. Eye is an organ with which we can see everything that comes within the eyesight, and we believe what we see. We are so accustomed to the phenomenon of visibility that we hesitate to believe in something that is not visible to us. The pupil intends to pinpoint that when we can see even far off things, how come, we do not see the soul, which is so close to us? He forgets that the eye, which is capable of seeing distant objects, is not able to see those which are too close. For instance, it fails to see the ointment within the eye.

Our concept of visibility hardly permits us to think of an invisible object like soul. It would be interesting to cite one anecdote. Once a group of science students went to a learned man and asked him to provide the proof of soul. Their arguments were similar to those raised here by the pupil. The man told that the soul being formless and shapeless, it is invisible and intangible. As such it cannot be comprehended by sense organs. There are quite a few things that are beyond the capability of senses. One has therefore to keep faith in the words of enlightened persons in such respects.

The students were not satisfied with the explanation and insisted upon some concrete proof. The man then said that he would show the soul to the most intelligent among them. The students brought forward one of them and said that he had the sharpest intellect. Thereupon the man asked that student to first show his intellect and thereafter he would show the soul. The student was exasperated by that argument and said that intelligence being intangible it cannot be physically brought forth. The learned man then replied that the same logic applies to soul. The students had thus to admit of the intangible soul.

Mäte Chhe Nahin Ätamä, Mithyä Moksha Upäy;
E Antar Shankä Tano, Samajävo Sadupäy.

There is thus no soul and therefore the means of liberation are futile; kindly show me the right way to remove this internal doubt of mine. (48)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil now concludes his arguments. He says, "I feel that there cannot be anything like a soul as separate from the body, brain, etc. If it is not there, where is the question of its bondage or liberation?" It is said: "Mulo Nästi, Kuto Shäkhä" (If there is no root, how can there be branches)? As such, there would hardly be any reason for pursuing the path of liberation.

The pupil does not actually believe in what he is arguing out. He has resorted to it only for eliciting the clarification. He has faith in the Guru. He understands that if the Guru talks of soul, it must exist. Therefore he surrenders to him and says, "This is the doubt that has been plaguing my mind. Please give me satisfactory reply about the existence of soul so as to enable me to proceed on the path of liberation."

It would be noticed that the above doubts arise by virtue of identification of soul with the body. The pupil has raised the following points against the existence of soul: (1) it is not seen, (2) it has no form, (3) it is not experienced, (4) it can be the same as body, senses, or breath, (5) there is no separate sign of its existence, and (6) it is not visible like a pot or cloth. The Guru will now clear these points one by one and establish the existence of soul to the satisfaction of the pupil.

Chapter 6: Guru's Explanation about the Existence of Soul (First Fundamental)

The Guru patiently listens to the arguments of the pupil. He knows that the pupil is a truth seeker and presents the arguments merely to learn the truth. In a way, the Guru is pleased to know his mind. In order to remove the pupil's doubts, he takes his arguments one by one and explains in the following ten stanzas how his doubts are misplaced. He knows that all those doubts arise from identification of the soul with the body. Therefore he takes that aspect first.

Bhäsyo Dehädhyästhi, Ätmä Deh Samän;
Pan Te Banne Bhinna Chhe, Pragat Lakshane Bhän.

*The soul seems the same as the body due to the illusory identification with embodiment; but both of them are different, as can be evidenced by their manifest characteristics. (*49)

Explanation & Discussion:

If we want to know about the existence of any object, we need to look for the properties of that object. Take the instance of milk. We know that the white color, liquidity, sweet taste, nourishment, transformability to yogurt, etc. are the properties of milk. Whenever we come across all these properties, we can say that the object must be milk. Being composed of earth, metal, etc. and having some shape, which can hold other materials, are the principal properties of a pot; while the capability to be worn, spread, washed, etc. are the properties of cloth. Similarly consciousness, which has the capability to experience itself and also to know other objects and situations, is the property of soul.

However, due to wrong identification the soul seems the same as body. The worldly soul has been staying in one body or another since the infinite time. That induces it to identify itself with the body. This happens on account of the ignorance about its true self. In this connection Shrimad has stated (Vachanämrut # 902) as under.

Deh Jiv Ek Rupe Bhäse Chhe Ajnän Vade, Kriyäni Pravrutti Pan Tethi Tem Thäy Chhe;
Jivani Utapati Ane Rog Shok Dukh Mrutyu, Dehano Swabhäv Jiv Padamän Janäy Chhe;
Evo Je Anädi Ek Rupano Mithyätva Bhäv, Jnäninä Vachan Vade DurThai Jäy Chhe;
Bhäse Jad Chaitanyano Pragat Swabhäv Bhinna, Banne Dravya Nij Nij Roope Sthit Thäy Chhe.

It means: Body and soul seem identical on account of ignorance and thereby their activities also seem identical. Birth, disease, mourning, misery, and death, which are properties of body, seem to be happening to soul. That false identification, prevailing since the infinity, disappears with the words of the enlightened. Then the nature of conscious soul and that of lifeless matter evidently look different and both the substances come to light as abiding in their own true natures.

That illusory concept leads to identifying the bodily activities with those of the soul. If one thinks properly, it can be easily seen that the soul and the body are distinct and different; they have different characteristics. The soul is pure consciousness, which is intangible, shapeless and formless. It is inherently imbibed with awareness. That property

enables it to comprehend and to know. The knowing property is the exclusive characteristic of soul. No other substance has that property.

On the other hand, the body is the aggregation of lifeless matter called Pudgal. It does not have knowing capability. Touch, taste, sight and smell are its principal attributes. Heavy or light, rough or smooth, hot or cold, and sticky or dry are the eight types of touch, of which every Pudgal particle has four types. Sweet, sour, bitter, pungent, and acrid are the five types of taste, and every particle can have one or more of those tastes. Violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red are the seven colors (The scriptures specify only five, viz. white, black, yellow, red, and green.). Every particle has one of those or a color derived therefrom. Good or and bad odor are two types of smell and every particle has one of them.

But soul does not have any of those attributes. Thus body and soul are totally different substances. They have distinctly different characteristics. During the embodied state, however, the soul has to stay within some body and occupies the same space that the body occupies. They thus stay together during the life span. That concurrent occupation creates the illusion of identification. That illusory approach is termed as Adhyäs. Under the influence of that Adhyäs, one thinks itself as the body and treats the comforts and discomforts of the body as its own. If there is some injury to the body, the soul feels as if it is experiencing the pain. If the body needs food for recouping its energy, the soul feels as if it is hungry. Such Adhyäs leads to desires, and desire is the root cause of wandering from birth to birth. During that wandering it migrates from one body to another. But its Adhyäs continues to stay and the soul tends to identify itself with the body that it gets from time to time. It is the purpose of religion to show that the soul is different from the body.

The identification of soul with the body is comparable to the mixture of milk and water. In that mixture, water and milk are homogenized and they seem to have assumed one form; they also look as one substance. Actually, however, it is a mixture of the two substances, which can be separated by appropriate process.

Bhäsyo Dehädhyästhi, Ätmä Deha Samän;
Pan Te Banne Bhinna Chhe, Jem Asi Ne Myän.

The soul seems the same as the body due to the illusory identification with the embodiment; both of them are, however, distinct and different like a sword and its sheath. (50)

Explanation & Discussion:

This stanza once again states that soul and body seem identical only on account of false identification. That repetition is made in order to emphasize the difference between the two. But their separateness is here compared with a sword and a sheath. When a sword is within its sheath, it does not come to the notice and both of them look as one object, but no one can doubt the separate existence of the sword from its sheath. Similarly the soul, though it is not noticeable, is separate from the body. Moreover, as the sword occupies the entire space of the sheath, the soul stays within every part of the body.

The Adhyäs pertaining to the body, which is called Dehädhyäs in these two stanzas, was discussed earlier. But there is also an Adhyäs relating to the senses. It is called

Indriyädhyäs. The worldly soul is used to know through the senses and as such, it remains attached to the objects of the senses. Under the impact of that attachment, the soul conceives of happiness as lying in the sense objects and tries to seek the same from the external sources. Such attachment being too strong, the worldly soul remains involved with the sense objects and the circumstances associated with them. That extrovert state of soul is termed as Bahirätmä. By virtue of that involvement, the soul does not find time to look inward to its own nature. That condition will change, when it comes in contact with a true Guru. Then it gets awakened from the slumbering state of ignorance and turns inward. Such an introvert state of soul is termed as Antarätmä.

Je Drashtä Chhe Drashtino, Je Jäne Chhe Roop;
Abädhya Anubhav Je Rahe, Te Chhe Jiv Swaroop.

That, which is the seer of eyesight, which recognizes the form, and which retains the unobstructed experience, constitutes the essence of soul. (51)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil had asked, 'Why is the soul not visible to the eye?' The eye is the most vital sense organ. Other organs are also important; but losing any of them does not handicap a person to the extent he would feel handicapped by the loss of eyesight. If one loses, for instance, taste of the tongue or if the tongue somehow ceases to function, he would feel less uncomfortable than one who loses the eyesight.

In reply to the pupil's question the Guru asks him to figure out the element that actually sees when an object comes within the eyesight. We normally conceive of two factors that are involved in the act of seeing. One is the eye and the other is the object. The eye is the instrument with which it is possible to see, and the object of sight is reflected in the eye. But the question is, 'Who is the seer?' That must be different from the means as well as the sight. Another question is, 'Who actually knows what is seen?' In other words, who knows the form? The Guru states that whoever is the seer and the knower is termed as soul. Seeing and knowing are thus the properties of soul. The eye is merely an instrument in the act of seeing. With that instrument the objects become visible to the seer; but the seer itself, the soul, cannot be visible thereby.

Let us consider the example of a person looking out from a window of his house. He sees the street, the houses, the people, and the vehicles passing by. If there are no obstructions, he can also see the trees or the lake and the hills that may be lying far beyond. But what is the role of the window in the act of seeing those objects? Does it see any of them? No; the window is an instrument for seeing, while the person is the seer of the window as well as of the scene. Moreover, it is not possible to see the person with the help of window. Similarly our eyes cannot see our soul, which is the seer of the eye as well as of the sight.

Another question of the pupil pertained to experiencing of the soul. Here experiencing denotes the feeling with which is associated the sense of `I' or `mine'. The Guru tells him to analyze his experience and to find out who experiences the sense of `I'. For instance, we walk with legs and undergo the experience of walking. That experience is thus associated with the ability of the legs to walk. Now let us analyze it. If, for instance, I lose the ability to walk on account of my legs being inoperative, can I still

visualize the former experience of walking? Of course, yes. It means that the experience of `I used to walk' was not associated with the legs. We can therefore eliminate the legs as being 'I'.

Now take another example. I might have an infection in a finger which needs to be cut off in order to prevent spreading of the infection. After healing can I visualize how much pain I had experienced? Of course, yes. As such, we have to eliminate the finger as having the sense of 'I'.

If we continue that process of elimination, it would be seen that none of the limbs or any part of the body, with which we normally associate the sense of 'mine', is the experiencer. It means that the act of identifying `I' with the body is misplaced. The real `I' is the invisible experiencer that stays within and which continues to function irrespective of any physical loss, handicap, or disability. That experiencer is the soul.

Chhe Indriy Pratyekane, Nij Nij Vishayanun Jnän;
Pänch Indrinä Vishayanun, Pan Ätmäne Bhän.

Each sense has the knowledge of its own subject matter; but soul knows the subject matters of all five senses. (52)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil had pointed out that the soul can be analogous to the sense organs. That analogy arises, because the worldly soul is used to identifying itself with the sense organs. Different living beings can have one or more (up to five) senses. Humans are blessed with all the five. The capability of each sense organ is, however, restricted to the object of that sense only. The tongue has the capability to taste, but it cannot smell, see, or hear; the nose can smell, but it cannot taste, see, or hear. Similarly the eyes can only see and ears can only hear. Moreover, those seeing and hearing capabilities are limited to specific wave lengths of light or sound. Every sense organ has thus limited capability. If the soul is identified with the sense organs, it would also have the limited capability to know and that too subject to possessing the sense organs.

That is, however, not in conformity with the nature of soul; it has infinite capability to perceive and to know. It has the capability to know the subjects of all five senses, individually or collectively, regardless of the sense organs. That capability is not fully manifested at present, because it stands obscured and obstructed on account of the impact of various Karmas. The purpose of spiritual pursuit is to eradicate the bondage of those Karmas and to manifest the full capability of the soul.

Deh Na Jäne Tehane, Jäne Na Indri, Prän;
Ätmäni Sattä Vade, Teh Pravarte Jän.

The body does not know that; neither do the senses, nor the breath; the knowing capability prevails on account of the presence of soul. (53)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil had suggested that the body or the sense organs or the breath could be treated as soul. Since knowing capability is the basic attribute of soul, the Guru asks him to examine whether any of the above three aspects has the capability to know. Every one has seen that at the time of death the body stays without the capability to know. It does not have any sense of feeling and does not experience pain, even when it is cremated. Therefore the body cannot be the soul.

Now consider the sense organs. They experience the senses of touch, taste, smell, etc. when the body is alive. When it is dead, the sense organs continue to be in the same place, but they lose the capability to experience. If some food is put on the tongue, it cannot taste; if a flower is brought near the nose, it cannot smell; the eyes which used to see different objects even from a distance, can no longer see, even if the objects are brought close to them. The same is the case with sound and touch. The ears cannot hear and the skin cannot feel. All these organs used to function, while the soul was there in the body, but they cease to function as soon as the soul leaves. Hence the sense organs cannot be the soul.

Now examine the breath. Respiration is an essential activity of a live body. It continues uninterrupted for the whole life. As soon as the body is dead, it stops breathing. One may therefore tend to equate breath with life. A study of the breathing mechanism would indicate that it is a device to provide oxygen to the body. But oxygen is not the life. Had it been life, the longevity could be extended indefinitely with the help of oxygen cylinders.

The respiratory system is no doubt essential for life, but it does not constitute life. There are various other activities like metabolism, blood circulation, brain activity, etc. which are also essential for life. In fact, brain stoppage is considered the sure sign of death. All these activities, including breathing, are incidental to the live body (body with the soul in it). None of these activities can be equated with soul.

Thus neither the body nor senses nor breath can be the soul, because they function only when the body is alive. The movement of the body and the knowing capability of the senses prevail in the presence of soul and they stop functioning in its absence. Therefore it is only the soul that perceives, sees, knows, and experiences.

Sarva Avasthäne Vishe, Nyäro Sadä Janäy;
Pragat Roop Chaitanyamay, E Endhän Saday.

It is always seen as distinct during all the states; manifest consciousness is its ever present characteristic. (54)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil had also raised the question of some sign or mark with which soul can be identified and had asked how it would be possible to accept the existence of soul in absence of any distinguishing mark. The Guru tells him that as long as there is soul, all the parts of the body remain live and conscious; awareness is evident in every part of the body. That is the sign of consciousness. It is experienced not only when one is awake, it prevails even during the sleeping, dreaming and slumbering states. If a fly or mosquito sits on the body while one is asleep, he moves it away by waving the hand.

Moreover, awareness continues to stay while undergoing changes in physical states. For instance, one grows from childhood to youth or to old age; his health may improve or deteriorate; he remains aware of the changes taking place in all such states.

Further, there is elegance in every part of the body. They look different from what they would look in absence of life. That difference is the sign of consciousness. Similarly one usually remembers what he might have experienced during a dreaming state. When he wakes up after a sound sleep, he realizes that he had gone through sleep and experiences the freshness gained thereby. It indicates that consciousness, the knowing capability, was prevailing during the sleep. That is the sure and manifest sign of the existence of soul. In fact, being alive or dead can be ascertained by the existence or non-existence of consciousness.

Ghat,Pat Ädi Jän Tun, Tethi Tene Män;
Jänanär Te Män Nahi, Kahie Kevun Jnän?

You believe in the pot, cloth, etc. because you (see and) know them; what type of knowledge is it, that you do not believe in the knower? (55)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil had said that if the soul exists, it should be apparent like a pot, cloth, and other material objects. In a way, the reply has been already given when it was explained that the soul is intangible, it has no form or shape and is therefore not visible like material objects. Here the Guru points out to the pupil, "You being the knower, you know pots, cloth, etc. and therefore believe in their existence. But why do you overlook the knower itself? Is it possible to know anything without the existence of knower? Since you know all those objects, it is clear that there is the knower. Is it not amazing that, while believing in the objects that you know, you are hesitating to accept the existence of knower (soul)!"

Param Buddhi Krush Dehamän, Sthool Deh Mati Alpa;
Deh Hoy Jo Ätamä, Ghate Na Äm Vikalpa.

There may be sharp intellect in a frail body and poor intellect in an obesse one;
that cannot happen, if the body had been the soul. (56)

Explanation & Discussion:

While reverting to the argument of the pupil about equating the body with the soul, the Guru asks him to examine the functioning of intellect. It is observed in many cases that a person may be having a very slim body, but he would be highly intelligent. Shrimad himself had a frail body, but how intelligent he was is known to every one. This Ätmasiddhi Shästra itself provides the evidence of his intellect.

On the other hand, it is also observed that one may be having a bulky body, but he may be short of intelligence. If the body could be the soul, the bulkier the body, the greater must be the soul and as a corollary, a bulkier person should be more intelligent

than a slim one. However, our general experience is contrary to it. As such, there is no rationale in arguing that the body and the soul could be the same.

Jad Chetanano Bhinna Chhe, Keval Pragat Swabhäv;
Ekpanun Päme Nahin, Trane Käl Dway Bhäv.

Manifest properties of lifelessness and consciousness are different; they can never become one; duality prevails forever. (57)

Explanation & Discussion:

It was explained earlier that the basic properties of lifeless matter and those of consciousness are different and distinct. Their manifest characteristics are different. When two lifeless things come together, they can either form a homogenous mixture like that of milk and water or heterogeneous one like that of sand and sugar. In either of the cases the things retain their own properties. Neither are they transformed into some different substance, nor do they become conscious matter.

If the things that come together are subject to a chemical reaction, a new substance can emerge out of their composition. For instance, the combination of hydrogen and oxygen can result in water vapor. But that composition also does not give the property of consciousness to water. Moreover, even in the composed state, hydrogen does not become oxygen nor does oxygen become hydrogen. The atoms of hydrogen retain their properties and the atom of oxygen retains its own. Those properties simply remain latent so long as the composition lasts. This becomes evident when hydrogen and oxygen are separated by electrolysis or other process. Then they again manifest their own distinct properties.

In this connection, it is worth pointing out what the poet Banarasidas had said about the soul and lifeless matter. He had stated that equanimity, elegance, sublimation, knowing capability, happiness, experiencing, and consciousness are the seven attributes of soul. On the other hand existence in the form of embodiment, mind, speech, non-cognizance, aggregation, lightness, heaviness, etc. are the attributes of lifeless matter. These attributes of soul are explained by Shrimad in Vachanämrut # 436, 437, and 438. Moreover, he has stated (Vachanämrut # 266) :

Jad Bhäve Jad Pariname, Chetan Chetan Bhäv;
Koi Koi Palate Nahin, Chhodi Äp Swabhäv.

It means: Lifeless matter turns into lifelessness and the conscious soul into consciousness. No substance changes into something else and gives up its own properties.

Every original substance thus retains its properties and does not adopt those of a different substance. Similarly, though the body and conscious soul happen to occupy the same space, they do not adopt the properties of each other and cannot be reduced to one matter. They were two separate substances in the past, they are separate in the present, and will remain so in the future.

Ätmäni Shankä Kare, Ätmä Pote Äp;
Shankäno Karnär Te, Acharaj Eh Amäp.

*The soul itself happens to be skeptical of the soul; it is immensely amazing that it is the doubter of itself! (*58)

Explanation & Discussion:

After presenting his doubts the pupil had said that there is no reason to believe in existence of soul. The Guru has successfully countered his arguments. While taking into consideration all the points underlying the pupil's arguments, he has convincingly shown the existence of soul in simple language which anyone can understand. The ability to explain the abstract nature of soul in such simple terms was the unique characteristic of Shrimad.

Finally by way of climax the Guru tells the pupil, "You doubt the existence of the soul, but have you considered who actually doubts? Who thinks that I have doubt? Who is that 'I'? Do you know who has the capacity to doubt?" Doubting is the property of soul. Lifeless matter does not have that capability. Doubt presupposes the existence of the doubter. Thus doubting itself is the evidence of soul's existence. To doubt the existence of soul amounts to saying, "I do not exist". But unless one exists, how can he doubt? The Guru therefore states to the pupil, "By doubting the existence of soul, you are doubting your own existence. Can there be anything more amazing or more ironic than that?"

Chapter 7: The Pupil's Second Doubt regarding the Everlastingness of Soul

By virtue of Guru's explanation the pupil gets inclined to believe in the existence of soul. A doubt, however, arises in his mind regarding the indestructibility of soul. He feels that soul cannot be eternal and that liveliness might be arising with birth and might be disappearing at the time of death.

Ätmänä Astitvanä, Äpe Kahyä Prakär;
Sambhav Teno Thäy Chhe, Antar Karye Vichär.

You have explained various aspects about the existence of soul; it is possible to believe in that while duly reflecting upon the same. (59)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil contemplated at length over the clarifications given by the Guru regarding the existence of soul. Such contemplation is very essential, because in absence of contemplation Guru's teachings would not have a lasting impact on the mind. If water is poured over a cloth or other porous objects, it would percolate the same; if, however, it is poured over a hard stone, it would simply make its surface wet and the rest of the water would flow away. Similarly if one contemplates over what has been taught, the teaching would penetrate his heart.

People often listen to sermons or lectures. If the speaker is an eloquent orator, the impression that arises in the mind is, "Oh, it was excellent!" But if someone asks what the speaker had said, they usually scratch their heads, because they cannot recollect what they had heard. This happens because people generally go to lectures for social purposes, for fun, for judging the eloquence of the orator, or for the sake of leisurely spending the time. They may therefore enjoy the speech, but nothing worthwhile goes within and is retained.

It is therefore necessary to ponder over what one listens. The deeper the contemplation, the more durable is the impact. The contemplation at length is particularly necessary in spiritual aspects. In this case the pupil has reflected deeply upon what the Guru had said and he feels convinced about the existence of soul as distinct from body, sense- organs or breath.

Biji Shankä Thäy Tyän, Ätmä Nahin Avinäsh;
Deh Yogathi Upaje, Deh Viyoge Näsh.

Now another doubt arises regarding the indestructibility of soul; it might emerge with the formation of the body and be destroyed when the body is decomposed. (60)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil now contends that the soul cannot be everlasting. It is every day experience that whatever we come across is subject to wear and tear, and is ultimately

destroyed. The pupil therefore argues that the soul also must be subject to the same process of destruction. He has now no doubt about its existence; but he feels that the soul might be arising with the formation of the body and might be destroyed at the time of death.

The pupil's argument is similar to Chärväk's point of view. Chärväk was an atheist, who did not believe in the existence of soul or God. He believed in living merrily as long as one survives. This can be seen from the following slogan of his philosophy:

Yävat Jivam Sukham Jivet, Runam Krutvä Dhrutam Pibet;
Bhasmibhutasya Dehasya, Punarägamanam Kutah?

It means: Live happily so long as you are alive; enjoy the rich foods even by incurring debt; how is the body, which is turned into ashes, going to come back?

But the pupil is not an atheist and does not believe in the philosophy of Chärväk. His purpose is to know the truth so that he can undertake the spiritual pursuit without having any doubt. He therefore presents the problems arising in the mind with a view to obtaining clarification.

Athavä Vastu Kshanik Chhe, Kshane Kshane Palatäy;
E Anubhavathi Pan Nahin Ätmä Nitya Janäy.

Alternately, every thing is ephemeral and undergoes change every moment; that experience also precludes the eternity of soul. (61)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil presents another argument based on every day experience. It is our experience that everything goes on changing. New things get old; they are torn, worn, broken, divided, transformed, decomposed etc. The change and transformation is thus the law of nature. Nothing stays in the same form and changes occur every moment. When that is the general experience, how is it possible to believe that the soul does not undergo change and stays in the same form forever? It must also be undergoing change.

This doubt of the pupil is similar to the belief of Buddhism. Lord Buddha had propounded that everything is transitory; nothing stays forever and continual change is the order of the universe. He therefore argued against the eternity of anything and refused to accept the everlastingness of soul. To most of the people, that theory seemed reasonable and in accordance with their experience. Millions of people therefore adopted it and became the followers of Buddha.

Chapter 8: Guru's Explanation of Soul's Everlastingness (Second Fundamental)

In the last chapter the pupil presented his doubts about the everlastingness of soul. The Guru has heard such arguments before; they are not new to him. He is also aware of the philosophies of Chärväk (non-existence of the soul) and Buddhism (transient or impermanent nature of soul). He knows that Buddhism has apparently a strong case and most of the spiritual aspirants falter on that point. He is therefore going to address the relevant aspects and show how those philosophies are one-sided and incomplete. The following nine stanzas would convince the pupil about the eternity of soul and dispel the concept of its impermanence.

Deh Mätra Sanyog Chhe, Vali Jad Roopi Drashya;
Chetananä Utpatti Lay, Konä Anubhav Vashya?

The body is a mere composition; it is lifeless, has a form, and is visible; on whose experience do emergence and extinction of consciousness rest? (62)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil had contended that the soul might be emerging in the body at birth and disappearing with death. In order to counter it, the Guru asks him to consider the nature of body. It is basically a composition. It is composed of carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, calcium, etc. Alternately it can be said that it is composed of five main elements, viz. earth, water, fire, air, and space, which are known as Panchmahäbhoot. To describe it in physical terms, it can be said that it is an organized assemblage of blood, muscles, fat, bones, etc. covered with skin.

Thus the body does not have its own substantial existence. Moreover, it is lifeless. Touch, taste, smell, and color, which are the attributes of lifeless Pudgal, are present in the body. Being lifeless, it does not have the knowing capability. Besides, it has some form. Its visibility is manifest, because we are able to see the body. The physical body is thus an object of eyesight.

How can such a body be capable of knowing the emergence and the extinction of soul? The attributes of soul are totally different from those of the body. Soul is not a composition; it has its own substantial existence. It is full of consciousness; knowing and remaining aware are its inherent characteristics. Moreover, it has no form or shape; it is intangible and invisible.

If the soul is subject to emergence and extinction as argued, who knows about the same? Obviously soul cannot know its own emergence or extinction. Can the body know it? Here the body means the lifeless one without a soul. It is plain that a lifeless body is incapable of knowing or experiencing. It does not even experience the pain when it is buried or cremated! In that case, how can it know that the soul emerges or gets extinct? As such, the question is: 'What is the basis on which one can say that the soul arises and is destroyed?'

While explaining this stanza Shrimad has pointed out (Vachanämrut # 718): "The body cannot be the basis, because it is manifestly lifeless.… If one states that the

consciousness knows its own emergence and extinction, it would amount to begging the question. It turns out to admitting that consciousness knows its own emergence and extinction. It is anomalous to say so; it's verbal aberration. To say that the soul knows its emergence and extinction and yet it does not last is analogous to someone stating that he has no tongue. Just think about the validity of such statement."

Jenä Anubhav Vashya E, Utpanna Layanun Jnän;
Te Tethi Judä Vinä, Thäy Na Keme Bhän.

The knowledge of such emergence and extinction can in no way arise, unless the agency experiencing that knowledge is different from the object. (63)

Explanation & Discussion:

After explaining that the body cannot know the emergence and extinction of soul, the Guru asks the pupil to consider who can know it. It can be stated as a matter of principle that the agency, which knows the emergence and extinction of an object, must be different from the object. It is therefore clear that only a substance, other than the soul, can experience the emergence and extinction of soul.

This concept may seem a little abstract. Let us therefore explain it with an illustration. Suppose the birth or death of a person is to be known. In that case, is it possible for that person to know his own birth or death? Obviously not; only some one else can know that the person has come into being or that he has come to the end.

If soul emerges with the body and disappears with its death, as it has been argued, the question would be: 'Who knows about such emergence and extinction? It was explained above that the inanimate body is not capable of knowing anything and only the soul (consciousness) has the property of knowing. Further, there is no other agency that can know about it. Hence to contend the soul's emergence or extinction turns out to be merely imaginary. There cannot thus be emergence or extinction of soul; it is everlasting.

Je Sanyogo Dekhie, Te Te Anubhav Drashya;
Upaje Nahin Sanyogathi, Ätmä Nitya Pratyaksha.

Whatever compositions that we notice can come to the experiential level; no composition can bring out the evidently everlasting soul. (64)

Explanation & Discussion:

After explaining that there is no agency to witness the emergence of soul, the Guru suggests to examine the compositions that we come across and find out whether there can be any composition that can turn out the soul. With all the scientific developments and inventions at our command, no one has brought out such a composition.

With the advent of cloning some people think that it is now possible to create life. But what cloning technique has done is to find out a new mode of turning out the bodies, in which the souls can dwell. Such bodies are normally generated by cellular division or by fertilization of female egg with male sperm. Cloning merely provides a new technique, in which the male role in the process of procreation can be eliminated. That

technique does not lead to the creation of soul. If soul could be created by cloning or any other technique, there are quite a few corporations that would produce it and the soul could then be purchased from the market. No one has, however, succeeded in doing it.

The explanation given under this stanza (Vachanämrut # 718) is pertinent in this connection. It states: "The compositions like bodies that come to our sight are the objects of seeing for soul, the experiencer; it means that they are the objects of sight and knowledge for the soul. If you examine the nature of such compositions, there would not seem any composition that could turn out soul". The soul is thus not an outcome of any composition; it is an uncomposed, original, eternal substance.

Jadathi Chetan Upaje, Chetanthi Jad Thäy;
Evo Anubhav Koine, Kyäre Kadi Na Thäy.

No one can ever experience the emergence of consciousness out of lifeless matter;
nor the consciousness turning into lifeless matter. (65)

Explanation & Discussion:

Lifeless matter and the conscious soul are two distinct and separate substances. They are independent of each other and one cannot emerge or be created out of the other. The lifeless matter that is pertinent here is known as Pudgal. Whatever we see with the eyes or experience with the help of any other organ is termed as Pudgal. It is a composite of infinite Paramänus (smallest particles), which are the most subtle, indivisible parts of matter. In scientific terms, subatomic particles can be treated as approximation to Paramänus.

It is possible to bring about different articles by combinations of Paramänus or by composing them suitably. Such bringing about is called production. Actually, it is transformation, because what is being done is to bring out something by processing the articles that were in existence. What thus happens in the name of production is really transformation.

It is now necessary to consider whether lifeless Pudgal can be transformed into soul or whether a soul can be transformed into Pudgal. Such transformation is not possible. With the help of science, we have brought out many lifeless objects by combination or composition of Pudgals. We have also been successful in producing the robots and putting them to work, but no one could put life therein. No permutation, combination or composition of Pudgal can thus be visualized to bring about the conscious soul. On the same analogy, the conscious soul can never be reduced to lifeless matter.

Koi Sanyogothi Nahin, Jeni Utpatti Thäy;
Näsh Na Teno Koimän, Tethi Nitya Sadäy.

That, which cannot arise out of any combination, cannot merge with anything else,
and is therefore eternal. (66)

Explanation & Discussion:

As stated above, all the objects that we come across have been continually undergoing transformation. The old forms disappear and the new ones come into being. Similarly the existing compositions are decomposed and the new ones take their place. Every existing form thus gives place to a new one and no form stays forever. Some of the transformations, like withering of flowers, are evident; while others, like aging, come to our notice after a long time. But the process is continuing every moment. Jainism conceives of Samay as the smallest unit of time, which is the infinitesimal part of a second. It is therefore said that every form gives place to a new one in each Samay.

Such transformation occurs in the case of objects, which are formed by composition or combination. It does not occur in the case of natural substances, which are not subject to composition or combination. Such substances cannot be produced, nor can they be destroyed. They can neither arise out of any combination, nor would they merge in anything else. The soul is such an original substance. It does not undergo any transformation and stays the same forever.

In this connection it would be of interest to refer to what Shrimad has said in the Letter of Six Fundamentals (Appendix-II). It states: "A pot, or cloth stays as such for a while, but the soul stays forever. Pot, cloth, etc. are composed of some materials; but the soul is a substance on its own, because no composition can be envisaged for producing the soul. Consciousness cannot arise out of any composition, so it is not a product. Since it cannot be composed, it has to be imperishable, because what cannot be produced by any composition cannot be decomposed, nor can it merge with anything else."

Krodhädi Tartamyatä, Sarpädikani Mänya;
Poorva Janma Sanskär Te, Jiv Nityatä Tyänya

Snakes and such other creatures have varying degrees of fury, etc.; such traits are derived from previous births; that shows the eternity of soul. (67)

Explanation & Discussion:

In this stanza the Guru points to the existence of previous births as the evidence for everlastingness of soul. This aspect has been scientifically explored by now and it has been found that in several cases the information about the previous lives was incontrovertible.

It is also noticed that snakes, scorpions, and such other creatures are furious. Their fury is not learnt by them in the current life. Similarly who could have taught a dog to bark or a donkey to brag? They possess those traits from the birth and hence could have been brought forth from an earlier life. In other words, the soul concerned must have acquired those traits, while it was in another body during a previous life. That is the evidence of the soul migrating from one body to another. It can therefore be clear that while changing the body from birth to birth, the soul continues to exist.

There are many people, who refuse to believe in a previous life. If they try to observe the nature, they can notice the innumerable living beings with different forms and

shapes, different aptitudes, having varying number of sense organs, undergoing different types and varying intensities of misery, pain etc. Is it possible that all such differences and variations occur without any cause? Keeping aside other beings, even among human beings there happens to be much diversity. Some are black, some are white; some are poor, some are prosperous; some live longer, some shorter; some are healthy, some are afflicted with disease; and so on.

Science would state that the physical variations are due to the differences in parental genes. But how can we account for the differences and diversities prevailing among the members of the same family? How do children get diseases, which are not possessed by their parents? Even twins conceived at the same time and born of the same parents display much diversity! There has to be some reason for all that, because nothing happens without a cause. The only sensible reason is that such phenomena occur on account of something that a soul might have indulged in earlier life. It means that the soul must have existed before. Once we accept that, it is easy to make out that it would continue to exist in future.

The explanatory note given (Vachanämrut # 718) under this stanza is pertinent here. It states, "The fury is noticed among snakes by birth; absence of violence is noticed among pigeons. From the very birth, bugs and other insects have the fear complex of being caught, and hence they tend to escape when we try to catch them. By birth, some beings have greater tendency of love, some have higher equanimity, some are more fearless, some have higher fear complex, some have more serenity, some have greater detachment, and some have more attachment for food, etc. Since such differences are noticed as existing from the birth, the reason thereof must lie in the traits developed from the earlier lives."

Ätmä Dravye Nitya Chhe, Paryäye Palatäy;
Bälädi Vay Tranyanun, Jnän Ekane Thäy.

As a substance, the soul is eternal but its states continue to change; childhood,
adulthood and old age are experienced by the same person. (68)

Explanation & Discussion:

This and the subsequent two stanzas are in reply to the pupil's contention that the existence of soul could be ephemeral or transitory. The reply in this stanza is based on Anekäntväd, meaning the multiplicity of viewpoints. Jainism considers every thing mainly from two points of view. One relates to the true nature of a substance and is known as the Dravyärthic viewpoint. From that viewpoint a substance always remains the same and continues to hold its natural properties. Neither does its nature change, nor do any of its inherent properties disappear. Jainism specifies six original substances, of which soul and Pudgal are more significant.

Take the instance of soul. Consciousness and knowing capability are its inherent properties, which always stay with it. Even when a soul is born as a one-sensed being, it is not entirely devoid of consciousness or of the knowing capability. This can be seen by the sense of pain and pleasure that is experienced even by plant life. The soul as a substance

thus continues to exist along with its inherent properties. From the Dravyärthic point of view, therefore, the soul stays forever.

The second viewpoint relates to its changing states. For instance, by virtue of Karma a human may be reborn as an animal, or a male as a female, but the soul remains the same. Those changes merely indicate its different states. To take a familiar example, a child grows up to be a youth and then grows old. These changes occur in the same body.

Now let us consider Pudgal. Earlier we had talked about transformation taking place in the worldly order. Every transformation involves a change from an old state to a new one. Natural forces are continually at work to bring about such changes. When water is turned into snow, its liquid form gives place to the solid one. The living beings too are instrumental in bringing about such changes. When a cow eats grass, the carbohydrate form of grass is destroyed and it assumes the form of blood, meat, milk, etc. When a goldsmith makes earrings out of a necklace, he destroys the necklace form of the gold and gives it the form of earrings. Thus, in every case of transformation the old form disappears and the new form comes into being, but the matter, hydrogen and oxygen in the case of water, and gold in the case of jewelry, remains constant.

Changes thus continue to occur every moment, but many changes become evident after some time. The sea waves provide the example of the change occurring every moment. The waves continue to rise and fall every moment, but the water remains the same. The waves merely present its changing states. In spiritual terminology this phenomenon of ever changing states is termed as Paryäy. To consider anything from that point of view is therefore called Paryäyärthic viewpoint.

This stanza states that the soul stays constant like the water in the sea, but its states go on changing like the waves. Ignorance and enlightenment, for instance, represent two different states of soul. Similarly, childhood, youth, old age, etc. are the changing states of an embodied soul. If one views the soul from that angle, it can be termed as transitory and ephemeral. Since, however, the soul knows all such changing states, it can safely be stated that the soul itself remains constant; it stays forever.

Athavä Jnän Kshanikanun, Je Jäni Vadanär;
Vadanäro Te Kshanik Nahin, Kar Anubhav Nirdhär.

Or, one who talks of the transitoriness after knowing it as such cannot itself be transitory; you can make sure of this by experiencing it. (69)

Explanation & Discussion :

Since the pupil had contended about the transitoriness of soul, the Guru points out that one, who talks of transitoriness, must exist. One cannot, for instance, speak of transitoriness without existing; he cannot therefore be transitory. Let us make this point a little more explicit.

When we term anything as transitory, we mean that its states go on changing every moment. Now if one, who knows something as transitory, is himself transitory, he

ceases to exist in that state the moment after knowing it. In that case, how can he express that a particular thing is transitory? For expressing it he needs to exist; it means that he cannot be transitory.

The pupil's argument of soul being transitory is thus meaningless. Without soul there is no liveliness and without liveliness no one can talk. The fact, that the pupil talks, indicates that there is a soul within him, and that soul continues to exist while he utters. To say that it is transitory means that the soul talks of itself as transitory. Isn't it absurd? The Guru therefore asks the pupil to ponder over it and to determine for himself that his soul is not transitory.

Kyäre Koi Vastuno, Keval Hoy Na Näsh;
Chetan Päme Näsh To, Kemän Bhale Tapäs?

No substance can ever be entirely destroyed; if consciousness is destroyed, find out wherein it can merge. (70)

Explanation & Discussion:

The Guru now turns to a scientific truth. Nothing that exists can be entirely destroyed. There can be alterations, whereby a substance would undergo changes in its states. In other words, while retaining its existence the substance gives up the old state and assumes a new one. Jainism calls this Utpäd-Vyay-Dhrauvya. Assuming of the new state is Utpäd; giving up the old one is Vyay; and retaining its own substance is Dhrauvya. No substance can thus be entirely destroyed. That is the natural law of conservation. Jain seers were aware of it and therefore refused to admit the concept of creation or of a Creator.

Since the pupil had contended that the soul cannot be everlasting, the Guru points out that as a substance the soul cannot be destroyed. When it ceases to exist in its present form, it must be assuming a new one. The Guru therefore asks the pupil to find out what new state the soul would assume, or wherein it would merge, if it ceases to exist.

The explanation given under this stanza (Vachanämrut # 718) takes the illustration of an earthen pot and points out, "When a pot is broken, it is said that the pot is destroyed, but the earth of which it was made is not destroyed. Even if the pot is reduced to pieces, even if it is pulverized, the earth would stay as Paramänu, it cannot be entirely destroyed. Not a single Paramänu of the erstwhile pot can be lost, because it is of every one's experience that an object can be transformed, but it is not possible to conceive of its total destruction."

The Guru therefore tells the pupil that if by extinction of soul he refers to its transformation similar to a pot, he should specify the form that a soul would assume after its extinction. In other words, as the Paramänus of the earthen pot are mixed with other earthly aggregates of Paramänus, he should explore with what matter consciousness can be mixed. He would then find out that consciousness is a substance that cannot mix with or merge into anything else. It is therefore safe to say that the soul is the everlasting consciousness.

Chapter 9: Pupil's Third Doubt regarding the Soul being Kartä

After learning about the existence and everlastingness of soul, the pupil thinks that if the soul is inherently endowed with infinite enlightenment and blissfulness, why has the worldly soul been wandering from birth to birth while undergoing unhappiness and distress? Moreover, why should there be so much diversity in embodiment and the antecedent situations? While pondering over it the idea comes to his mind that Karma could be the reason, and if it is so, the question would be: 'How does Karma arise?'

The theory of Karma is generally acceptable to all the Aryan philosophies, but Jainism has gone deeper into the matter. It states that by virtue of indulging in craving and aversion the worldly soul continually acquires Karma. There are many types of Karma, but Jainism classifies them in eight broad categories. Four of them like age span, status, etc. do not affect the nature of soul and are therefore treated as Aghäti or non-defiling Karmas. The remaining four are called Ghäti or defiling ones. Of the latter four, Mohaniya (Deluding) Karma is considered the most hurtful, because that Karma does not allow the worldly soul to make out its true nature. As such, that Karma is mainly responsible for soul's wandering from birth to birth.

In addition to specifying different types of Karma known as Prakruti, Jainism also specifies its duration known as Sthiti, its intensity known as Ras or Anubhäg, and extent of the bondage known as Pradesh. It points out that Mithyätva, Avirati, Pramäd, Kashäy, and Yog are the five factors that lead to acquisition of Karma. Mithyätva denotes wrong perception, Avirati denotes absence of restraint, Pramäd denotes indolence, Kashäy denotes defiling instincts, and Yog denotes undue or invigilant exercise of the physical, verbal and mental faculties. Of these five factors, Mithyätva is the most significant.

The pupil has not gone very deep in the theory of Karma. He is not sure about soul's acquiring of the bondage of Karma. If it acquires, the pupil wonders how it could be acquiring that bondage. Several alternatives occur to him. Would Karma be clinging to the soul of its own accord? Or would it be within the nature of soul to acquire Karma? Or would God or Nature be prompting it to do so? In the following three stanzas he presents his doubt relating to these alternatives.

Kartä Jiv Na Karmano, Karma Ja Kartä Karma;
Athavä Sahaj Swabhäv Kän, Karma Jivano Dharma.

The Soul cannot be Kartä of Karma, Karma itself might be prompting the Karma; alternately, it might be the soul's innate nature, or it may be its property to acquire Karma. (71)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil states that there is no evident reason for a soul to acquire Karma. When it is aware that it has to bear the consequences, why would it act in a way that would lead to the bondage of Karma? It is therefore possible that the existing Karma might be prompting new particles of Karma to turn towards the soul and they might be clinging to

it. In that case it would not be possible for the soul to avoid the influx of Karma and it would helplessly remain bound to it.

But occurrence of the bondage that way does not seem reasonable to the pupil. He therefore thinks that it could be the innate nature of soul to act in a way that leads to bondage. In that case also the soul has to acquire the bondage. If it is its property to acquire Karma, no one can stop it from functioning, and the soul would forever continue to acquire the bondage of Karma.

Ätmä Sadä Asanga Ne, Kare Prakruti Bandh;
Athavä Ishwar Preranä, Tethi Jiv Abandh.

The soul is always unbound, Nature itself creates the bondage; or God might be inspiring it to act. As such the soul stays unbound. (72)

Explanation & Discussion:

Another idea occurs to the pupil. He has learned that the soul is inherently unattached and unbound. As such, no bondage can arise and the acquisition of Karma could be imaginary. In other words, the soul cannot indulge in anything that can lead it to bondage. Undertaking of an activity is dependent upon the Nature (Prakruti). Since such activities cannot create bondage, the soul remains unbound.

Here the pupil might also be resorting to Sänkhya philosophy, which gives a different connotation to the term Prakruti. That philosophy divides the entire universe into two parts. One is termed as Purush, which denotes soul and the other is termed as Prakruti, which denotes every thing else. Prakruti is supposed to have 24 components. Of these, the first group consists of five fundamental aspects, viz. earth, water, fire, air, and space. The second group consists of five sense organs, viz. skin, tongue, nose, eyes, and ears. The third group consists of five active organs, viz. speech, hands, feet, anus, and genitals. The fourth group consists of five sense objects, viz. touch, taste, smell, sight, and sound. Mind, intelligence, tendencies and ego are the remaining four. The worldly life consists of the interaction of these 24 elements, but Purush (soul) stays unaffected by any of them.

After arguing from Sänkhya ideology, the pupil remembers the concept of God as the creator and regulator of the universe. The Vedäntists and Naiyäyiks believe that every thing happens solely by the wish and inspiration of God. The pupil therefore thinks that soul might be acting under the inspiration of God. In that case also soul does not do anything on its own and hence it should not incur any bondage.

Mäte Moksha Upäyano, Koi Na Hetu Janäy;
Karmatanun Kartäpanun, Kän Nahi, Kän Nahi Jäy.

As such, there is no purpose in seeking the path of liberation; either the acquisition of Karma does not occur, or it stays forever. (73)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil now concludes his arguments. He says that in light of the above considerations it is clear that the soul cannot acquire the bondage of Karma. If it happens to acquire Karma by virtue of its nature, it cannot escape from it, because no substance can give up its properties. If acquiring of Karma is its property, the soul will continue to acquire the same. As such, there is no purpose in pursuing the path of liberation.

The concept of liberation is based on averting the impact of Karma. As soul happens to acquire Karma, it has to take birth in order to bear the consequences. Since it remains mostly involved in unwholesome Karma, it begets unfavorable situations. As such, it undergoes misery and pain associated with it. In order to get freed from that it needs to avoid acquiring Karma. If, however, the acquisition of Karma is not within its nature, the question of avoiding it would not arise. Alternately, if the acquisition occurs under the inspiration of God or some other authority, the soul would be helpless in the matter. In either of the situations there would hardly be any reason to talk about its liberation.

Chapter 10: Guru's Explanation about the Soul being Kartä (Third Fundamental)

The Guru sees that the pupil is led by the considerations of Sänkhya and other beliefs and has not correctly grasped the theory of Karma. As such, he harbors doubt about the soul being Kartä of Karma. He has presented the following four alternatives for occurrence of Karma: (1) Karma itself may be actuating new Karma, (2) It may be the nature of soul to acquire Karma, (3) Every thing might be occurring according to Nature (Prakruti) and (4) Karma might be acquired under the inspiration of God. He has, however, failed to consider the case of soul inducing the activities of body, speech, and mind. If such activities occur under the inspiration of soul, it becomes responsible for that

In this connection, it is worth considering what Shrimad has stated in the Letter of Six Fundamentals (Appendix-II). "All objects are associated with purposeful activity. All of them are seen with some or other activity that causes change or alteration. The soul is also imbibed with activity. Being active, it is Kartä. The omniscient Lords have described three types of its activities. In absolute state when the soul stays tuned to its pure nature, it is Kartä of that nature; in terms of worldly activities it is Kartä of the material Karma; and nominally it is Kartä of the physical objects like buildings, towns, etc."

Of these three types, the first type does not result in bondage of Karma, because the soul stays within its true nature. The second one does account for bondage. The third one is nominal and would result in Karma, if soul resorts to the sense of attachment or resentment regarding any of the activities. In the following five stanzas the Guru explains how soul happens to react to the worldly aspects and incurs the bondage.

Hoy Na Chetan Preranä, Kon Grahe To Karma?
***Jad Swabhäv Nahi Preranä, Juo Vichäri Dharma*.**

If there is no inspiration from consciousness, how and who would acquire Karma?
Examine the natural property; the lifeless matter has no capability to inspire. (74)

Explanation & Discussion:

Since the pupil had suggested that soul cannot be Kartä of Karma, the Guru asks him to figure out what induces Karma particles to be attached to a soul. Like other Pudgal particles, Karma particles also prevail everywhere in the universe and make movements on their own accord. Left to themselves, they would simply pass by without creating any impact on soul. When, however, they pass by, the worldly soul happens to react to the same with the sens of craving or aversion by virtue of his likes or dislikes.

Such craving or aversion is not the inherent part of soul's property, but it has the capability to indulge that way. While indulging as such, it happens to react to the Karma particles, which come within its proximity. That motivates those particles to infiltrate the provinces of soul. This is similar to a person smeared with oil remaining prone to attract the dirt. As the dirt stays on the body until he cleans it, so do Karma particles stay with the soul until maturity. That is called the bondage which extends the appropriate consequences at the time of maturity. At that time if the soul neither resents nor gets attached to any situation and bears the consequences with equanimity, it would not acquire new Karma and the existing bondage would be stripped off in due course.

But the worldly soul is used to indulge in craving or aversion depending upon the types of consequences. If it considers them favorable, it would crave for their continuance; if it considers them as unfavorable, the soul endeavors to avert the same. By virtue of such craving and aversion the soul incurs new bondage. The earlier bondage is bound to extend its consequences. By reacting to the same with craving or aversion, the soul incurs new bondage. The cycle of old Karma leading to new Karma thus continues to operate.

Karma particles are lifeless. However intense the existing bondage of Karma may be, they have no capability to bring in new Karma on their own. It is entirely due to the inclination of soul that new Karma particles get attached to it.

Let us see examine this with an illustration. By virtue of an earlier wholesome Karma, one may be blessed with a favorable situation. At the time of dinner, for instance, he may be served with relishing food. If he takes it as a result of his Karma and eats the same without any particular preference for the type of food, he can be considered as dispassionately availing the consequence of his Karma. Thereby he would not acquire new ones. However, being used to indulge in likes and dislikes, he may feel elated by the food and crave for getting more or getting the same again. That craving induces fresh Karma particles to enter the soul's province and stay with it. In other words, the soul acquires a new bondage.

Now let us take an illustration of aversion. One gets into an unfavorable situation by virtue of an earlier unwholesome Karma. Suppose he gets an evil-minded neighbor, who starts abusing him for a wrongly perceived cause. Now if the person takes it as a consequence of his earlier Karma and bears it with equanimity, he does not acquire new Karma. However, being used to retaliate he gets angry and fights back. That tendency to fight back induces new Karma particles to enter the soul's province. The soul thus becomes the Kartä by virtue of its indulgence in craving or aversion.

Such capability to induce or inspire lies only with soul. The lifeless Pudgal cannot do that. It is therefore said in the second part of the stanza that lifeless objects do not have such capability. They can merely be instrumental to what happens. They can neither induce nor inspire any one to behave in a particular way. Suppose, in the above illustration, the person hits the neighbor with a stick. In that case the stick is no doubt instrumental in giving vent to the anger; but if the person keeps his anger under control, the stick is not going to prompt him to hit, nor is it going to hit the neighbor of its own accord.

Now suppose there is a watch lying somewhere. If someone picks it up, the watch lying in unattended condition becomes instrumental in being picked up. But if the person is not inclined to pick it, the watch is not going to tell him to pick it up. Therefore the Guru states that it is not the property of lifeless objects to induce or to inspire.

Jo Chetan Karatun Nathi, Nathi Thatän To Karma;
Tethi Sahaj Swabhäv Nahi, Temaj Nahin Jiv Dharma.

If consciousness does not induce, no Karma occurs; as such, that is neither the innate nature nor the property of soul. (75)

Explanation & Discussion:

As one of the alternatives the pupil had suggested that incurring of Karma could be the innate nature of soul. In other words, it could be the nature of soul to acquire Karma. The Guru therefore points out that if the soul does not indulge in craving or aversion, it does not induce the Karma particles to infiltrate. They would continue to move according to their own nature without causing any impact on soul. If a soul therefore observes equanimity in all the circumstances, no bondage would occur.

The inherent property of an object cannot be separated from it. Wherever there is an object, its property is bound to be there. If such property can be separated, the object itself would cease to exist. For instance, sweetness is the inherent property of sugar. We cannot come across any sugar which is not sweet. If there is some object that looks like sugar, but does not taste sweet, it could be salt or something else, but not sugar. As such, if acquisition of Karma had been the property of soul, it would never stop acquiring Karma. In that case, it can never reach the Karmaless state. It is, however, known that innumerable souls have attained that state and have been liberated. Therefore acquiring of Karma is not the property of soul.

Keval Hot Asang Jo, Bhäsat Tane Na Kem?
Asang Chhe Paramärthathi, Pan Nij Bhäne Tem.

Had the soul been entirely unbound, why do you not experience that? In absolute sense it is unbound, but that is subject to realization. (76)

Explanation & Discussion:

In chapter two we had discussed Nishchay Naya, the absolute point of view. From that point of view soul is unbound and stays pure forever. The Sänkhya and Vedänt philosophies are based on that. While presenting the case of soul not being Kartä, the pupil had resorted to that viewpoint and had argued that soul is the embodiment of total purity; it always remains spotless and unadulterated. It cannot therefore be involved in anything that would attract Karma particles. As such, it should stay unbound. This argument is more or less analogous to the stand point of bare knowledgeable persons.

The Guru now points out that what the pupil had said is right from the absolute point of view. But that is the supreme state denoting the state of liberation. Liberated souls are pure and stay pure forever. But the worldly soul remains involved in the situations occurring from time to time. It feels elated when a situation is favorable, and gets depressed when it is not. Thus it continues to indulge in craving and aversion.

Had the worldly soul been unbound and unadulterated, the pupil should have been able to experience the purity within him. The fact that he does not experience it shows that his inherent pure state is not still manifest. The same way all the worldly souls are far from purity. The Guru therefore states that the soul is inherently unbound, but presently that state is dormant. One therefore needs to make effort for manifesting that state. If one abides within his inherent purity, he stays unbound; otherwise he has to strive for gaining the perfect purity. For that purpose, one has to understand his present limitations. If he ignores that aspect, he would not get to the right path, and will continue to wander in the worldly life.

Kartä Ishwar Koi Nahi, Ishwar Shuddha Swabhäv;
Athavä Prerak Te Ganye, Ishwar Doshprabhäv.

There is no creator-God, God denotes perfect purity; if God is conceived of as being the inspirer, He would get subject to impurity. (77)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil had argued that God might be prompting the souls to behave in a way that would lead to Karma. Most religious philosophies conceive of God as the creator, regulator and dispenser of justice. People like to believe in such concepts, because they feel that if they keep God pleased, He would provide for making them happy and comfortable. Moreover, if they remain devoted to Him, the kind and merciful God would also forgive their faults.

The psychologists believe that the concept of a protective God has arisen from childhood psyche. Children remain scared of unknown situations and like to rely upon their parents or other elders to protect them. Similarly most people like to believe in God who can protect them from evils. Moreover, as children are brought into the world by the interaction of parents, people tend to think of a creator, who would be producing the universe and everything within it out of his free will.

If one thinks deeply, it would be easy to see that there is no basis for the concept of creation or a Creator. The Guru therefore states that there is nothing like God as the creator or the prompter. It is, however, perfectly reasonable to conceive of godliness that connotes dignity and greatness born of total purity. That state denotes the perfection. Such perfect purity is godly. That purity lies latent in every soul and one needs to endeavor for manifesting the same.

Such a state is beyond all desires and aspirations. If God is considered the Creator, He must have the desire to create. Such desiring does not befit those, who have attained perfection. God would thus stand to lose by being the Creator. His dignity, instead of getting elevated, would actually be lowered. It is therefore stated that by treating Him as the Creator, God would be subject to impurity. Moreover, if God is conceived of as prompter, why would He prompt one person to undertake wholesome activity and another to undertake unwholesome one?

There are thus many problems in treating God as the Creator or prompter. The explanation given under this stanza (Vachanämrut # 718) points out, "if God or any other agency happened to impose Karma, there would not be any scope for justifying the role of soul in that respect. Its existence is admitted on the basis of its property of inducement etc. If such properties are attributed to God, what are the other properties by which soul can be identified? Therefore Karmas are not inspired by God. That function has to be attributed to soul."

Chetan Jo Nij Bhänmän, Kartä Äp Swabhäv;
Varte Nahi Nij Bhänmän, Kartä Karma-Prabhäv.

If the soul remains conscious of its true self, it acts in tune with its nature; if it does not remain conscious, it would become Kartä of Karma by virtue of its involvement. (78)

Explanation & Discussion:

The Guru had earlier pointed out that the soul acquires Karma by virtue of its inducing the particles of Karma to infiltrate within. But that happens only when the soul is extrovert. The situation starts changing when it turns introvert. Then it realizes that craving and aversion are not part of its true nature. It therefore strives to avoid the same by staying within its true nature. That consists of right perception, right knowledge, and right conduct. As that happens to an ever increasing extent, the inherent purity of soul starts manifesting and it remains absorbed therein. That is the soul's true nature and staying within that nature forever constitutes liberation.

The question may arise, 'How staying within itself could be the activity in the liberated state? The liberated soul is supposed to be inactive. How can any activity be attributed in that state?' In this respect the explanation given under this stanza in Vachanämrut (#718) mentions as under.

"The pure soul is not Kartä of any external, extrovert or defiling activity and can therefore be termed as inactive. But if it is said that it does not have the activity of its inherent consciousness, it would amount to non-existence of its own nature. The pure soul does not have embodiment and as such it is inactive; but it is active by virtue of having the activity of consciousness etc. which are inherent within its nature."

In short, it is the nature of consciousness to remain active. Its activity in the worldly state comes to the notice in the form of craving, aversion, delusion, etc. Similarly, staying tuned to its nature is its activity in the liberated state. If it had no activity in that state, it would turn out to be a lifeless inanimate object.

Chapter 11: Pupil's Fourth Doubt regarding Bearing of the Consequences of Karma

After realizing that the soul acquires the bondage of Karma due to its own indulgence, the pupil comes to the next aspect of bearing the consequences. Here he comes across the problem of the agency or the mechanism that can extend the consequences of Karma. The soul is no doubt the Kartä, but who is going to judge its activities and hand down the appropriate consequences? There does not appear to be any agency that would function as the dispenser of justice. His problems in this respect are presented in the following three stanzas.

Jiv Karma Kartä Kaho, Pan Bhoktä Nahi Soy;
Shun Samaje Jad Karma Ke, Fal Parinämi Hoy?

The soul may be Kartä of Karma, but need not bear the consequences; how can lifeless Karma be intelligent enough to extend the consequences? (79)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil admits that the soul acquires Karma on account of its craving and aversion, but he fails to make out how it can bear the consequences. There are two problems in admitting that the soul has to bear them, viz. i) who is going to decide the right consequences and ii) who would hand down the same to the soul? Had there been some live agency involved therein, it can take such decisions and extend the right consequences. In this case there is soul on one hand, which acquires the bondage. Being the subject of that activity, it cannot, on its own, decide to bear the consequences. On the other hand there is lifeless Karma, which is not capable to know. It does not even know that a particular soul has acquired certain bondage. How could it then decide about extending the consequences? Since it has no intelligence, it cannot make any judgment or any other decision.

Faldätä Ishwar Ganye, Bhoktäpanun Sadhäy;
Em Kahye Ishwartanun, Ishwarpanun Ja Jäy.

If God is conceived of as the provider of consequences, there could be a case for bearing the consequences; but that sort of contention would result in loss of God's godliness. (80)

Explanation & Discussion:

Most people believe in an almighty God, who would judge the activities of every being and would dispense the justice. If one subscribes to that belief, then God constitutes the agency, which can extend the appropriate consequences of Karma. God being impartial, He can properly judge every case and hand down the right consequences to every being. But there is no valid case for believing in the existence of God as the dispenser of justice. There are innumerable living beings who happen to acquire Karma every moment. If we admit the existence of God as the judge, He would not be in a position to judge all the cases, even if He is equipped with a supercomputer or with superhuman capability.

Moreover, sitting in judgment presupposes the propensity to act and that itself would lead to acquisition of Karma. It means that God himself would be subject to

acquiring Karma. Since godliness denotes unadulterated purity, conceiving of Him as being the judge amounts to compromising that purity. Thus by being a judge, He would stand to lose godliness. As such, the existence of God as the dispenser of justice is ruled out.

Ishwar Siddha Thayä Vinä, Jagat Niyam Nahi Hoy;
Pachhi Shubhäshubh Karmanän, Bhogyasthän Nahi Koy.

Without proving the existence of God there cannot be any order in the world; nor can there be places for bearing the consequences of wholesome and unwholesome Karmas. (81)

Explanation & Discussion:

As there is the necessity of some agency to dispense justice, it is also necessary to have the appropriate places where different souls can bear the consequences of their Karmas. For instance, there need to be the heavenly abodes, where virtuous souls can reap the fruits of their wholesome Karmas and also for infernal abodes, where the vicious ones can bear the evil consequences of their unwholesome Karmas.

The provision and maintenance of such locations necessitates the assumption of God. Without Him, who can maintain such places and who would regulate life and other forces operating in the world? By presenting this question, the pupil contends that since there cannot be such a God, there is no case for souls to bear the consequences of their Karmas. He does not want to contend that the soul does not have to bear the consequences. He is aware that if the soul acquires Karma, it must bear the consequence. But he is not clear about the mode of its operation and has raised these questions for seeking the clarifications.

The readers are in a position to note that the pupil has been raising very vital questions on all issues. They may also feel that he is actually giving vent to their own minds. That happens because these questions and answers are actually presented by Shrimad himself. In order to make the presentation meaningful and interesting, he has presented these six Fundamentals in the form of dialogue between the pupil and the preceptor. Since Shrimad had pure self-realization, he knew which types of questions would arise to the truth seekers and has presented the same accordingly.

Chapter 12: Guru's Explanation about the Soul bearing the Consequences (Fourth Fundamental)

Jainism is very specific on one point. Every one has to bear the consequences of his Karma. That is the universal, inexorable rule. Heavenly beings also cannot escape from that. Even the soul of Lord Mahavir had to live in the lowest infernal level for bearing the consequences of the acutely unwholesome Karma that it had acquired during the life of Triprushta Väsudev. There is no exception to that rule. In order to bring home that truth, Shrimad has observed as under in the Letter of Six Fundamentals (Appendix-II).

"All activities are fruitful; they are not futile. It is the evident experience that whatever is done has its consequence. The consumption of poison or sugar and the contact with fire or snow do not fail to produce their consequences. Similarly if the soul indulges in defiled or undefiled mode, that mode is bound to be fruitful and that produces its consequences. Thus being the Kartä of such activity, the soul bears the consequences as well."

In the following stanzas the Guru takes up the points raised by the pupil regarding the soul having to bear the consequences and puts his doubts at rest.

Bhäv Karma Nij Kalpanä, Mäte Chetan Roop;
Jivviryani Sfuranä, Grahan Kare Jad Dhoop.

The tendency to react is a propensity of soul and is therefore conscious; the vibrations in the soul's vigor cause the lifeless particles to penetrate within. (82)

Explanation & Discussion:

The major question that normally arises in the minds of thinking people is: 'How can the lifeless particles of Karma be attached to the conscious soul?' This stanza is meant to explain that. It is implicit in the concept of soul's intangibility that it is not capable of doing anything tangible. It can merely remain aware of what happens. It is, however, capable to get inclined, because inclination and disinclination are intangible. In the perfected state the soul does not have any inclination. The worldly soul, by virtue of its ignorance, is used to get inclined or disinclined towards different objects and situations. Such inclination or propensity, though not inherent in soul, is a conscious property and is therefore known as Bhäv Karma.

If the soul does not have any sort of inclination towards the situations arising as a result of its previous Karma, it would not give rise to Bhäv Karma. But its getting inclined leads to likes or dislikes for the situations concerned and that gives rise to Bhäv Karma. The soul's vigor is thereby directed towards or against such situations. In other words, it indulges in craving or aversion and that leads the Karma particles to infiltrate. That is known as material or Dravya Karma. That phenomenon can also be presented by saying that Bhäv Karma causes vibrations within a soul, and those vibrations attract the Karma particles inward and get attached to the soul. Bhäv Karma thus leads to the acquisition of Dravya Karma.

Inclination or disinclination arises by virtue of consciousness getting involved with the mental apparatus. Most worldly souls behave instinctively. This indicates soul’s forsaking its vigor to the extent of such instinctive behavior. It is therefore easy for the mind to drag consciousness the way it likes. In the case of spiritual aspirants too, when their mind exercises too much force, the consciousness may fail to exercise enough countervailing spiritual force to withstand it and may remain subservient to it. The mind is thus primarily responsible for the acquisition of Karma. Therefore the emphasis of spiritual pursuit rests on overcoming the mental defilement regardless of actual physical acts.

The anecdote of King Prasenjit is relevant here. On listening to Lord Mahavir's discourse, he gained detachment towards the worldly life. Hence entrusting the interests of his young son to his trusted counselors, he became a monk. In that capacity while he was once meditating, he happened to overhear from the passers-by that he was a fool to entrust the interests of his son to the said counselors, who were conspiring to kill the boy and usurp the throne. Thereby Prasenjit got concerned about the well being of his son. While thinking about the disloyalty of those counselors, he got so agitated that he forgot his monastic state and became mentally engrossed in fighting against those supposed conspirators. His rage against them continued to rise and ultimately it reached a stage that would have led him to infernal abode, if he had died at that moment. Fortunately he became conscious of it in time and turned back from the evil thoughts. He overcame the mental defilement with acute repentance and attained the omniscience. This story emphasizes how the mental state prevailing from time to time makes the difference.

Zer Sudhä Samaje Nahin, Jiv Khäy Fal Thäy;
Em Shubhäshubh Karmanun, Bhoktäpanun Janäy.

Poison and nectar have no capability to understand, but one who consumes them gets the results; similarly a soul bears the consequences of its wholesome or unwholesome Karma. (83)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil had pointed out that Karma is lifeless, and does not understand how to extend the right consequences. This concept of the lifeless matter being unable to do anything may, prima facie, seem reasonable, but it is not true. If we minutely observe, it can be noticed that every object is imbibed with some visible or invisible activity. All the objects that we come across are seen as undergoing change. New ones get old and worn; they change in size, shape, color, odor, and taste; they break, crack, and collapse. Visible and invisible forces are continually at work for bringing out such changes.

Lifeless objects do not have any specific plan to bring out a particular change. For instance, a flowing river does not have any plan to give the round shape to a rough stone. But while being in the stream the stone becomes round by the impact of flowing water. In Jain terminology, it can be stated that the stone was to get a round shape and the flowing water was instrumental in bringing about that change. It can therefore be said that every object is imbibed with activity.

Here the Guru explains that phenomenon with the illustration of poison and nectar. Those two substances are lifeless and do not have any concept about their

properties. Neither poison has any plan to kill nor does nectar have any plan to rejuvenate. But the person who consumes the poison would die, and the one who takes the nectar would be rejuvenated. Those outcomes occur on their own without those objects having any plan or intention to provide such results. Similarly the wholesome Karma does not have a plan to provide good consequences, nor has the unwholesome Karma a plan to provide bad ones. But those consequences automatically come forth at the time of maturity. The pupil's contention that in absence of God there is no mechanism, which can provide the consequences of Karma, is thus misplaced.

Ek Ränk Ne Ek Nrup, E Ädi Je Bhed;
Käran Vinä Na Kärya Te, Te Ja Shubhäshubh Vedya.

One becomes a king and another stays a pauper; such differences cannot occur without the cause; that indicates bearing of the consequences of wholesome and unwholesome Karma. (84)

Explanation & Discussion:

There are innumerable living beings in the world, but they are not identical. When we see insects like ants, or birds like crows, we tend to think that those of the same flock are identical, but they are not. All crows, for instance, look alike; but that impression arises because we get only a fleeting image and do not have the opportunity to observe them properly. If we examine closely, it could be seen that no crow is exactly similar to another.

This becomes evident when we observe the domesticated animals like cows or horses. In case of human beings that becomes even more obvious. No person looks exactly similar to any one else. They differ in height, complexion, strength, facial features, etc. Even the functioning of their minds is different. One's concepts, sentiments, emotions, aspirations, etc. are bound to be different from those of others.

Even their intelligence and spiritual inclinations are different. If two persons pray to the same deity at the same time, the mode and depth of their devotion would be different. If they simultaneously undertake Samayik, one can gain equanimity quicker than the other; he may dwell therein deeper and longer than the other. Moreover, the level of equanimity in the same person also varies from time to time. Sometimes he achieve it easily, while on another occasion he fails to achieve it in spite of repeated efforts.

There has to be some reason for all such differences and variations. The spiritual science states that they are outcomes of previous wholesome or unwholesome Karma. One person tries to change his job for the better and succeeds in his endeavor, but another person resorting to the same process may fail to get a better job. We generally call it his bad luck. But we overlook the fact that the good or bad luck arises on account of one's Karma. By virtue of his wholesome Karma one may become a president or a king, and another with identical caliber might have to wander in the streets. It is therefore said here that good or bad situations arise as the consequences of the wholesome or unwholesome Karma, and every one has to bear the consequences of his Karma.

Faldätä Ishwar Tani, Emän Nathi Jaroor;
Karma Swabhäve Pariname, Thäy Bhogathi Door.

For that it is not necessary to have God as the dispenser of consequences; Karma fructifies of its own nature and is stripped off after the consequences are borne.
(85)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil had pointed out the necessity of God as the dispenser of good or bad consequences and had asked, 'Who would extend the appropriate consequences in absence of such a dispenser?' As a matter of fact, every action has its outcome, and no dispenser is required for that purpose. Whatever is being done, the consequences follow automatically. If one consumes poison, he faces the consequence of death; while by consuming sugar, he gets consequent energy. Similarly if one touches fire, he gets burnt; and if he touches snow, he would feel the coolness. These illustrations pertain to the objects of taste and touch, but the rule applies to every object and every situation. It can therefore be said that every conscious or unconscious activity has its consequence. The only difference is that the lifeless matter does not have the capability to experience the consequences, while the conscious soul does.

If one minutely observes, he can make out that every situation is the consequence of some operative Karma, and such Karma is stripped off after the consequences are borne. If one keeps that in mind, he would bear those consequences with equanimity and would thereby avoid the new bondage of Karma. Attainment of right perception would then be within easy reach. Moreover, if consequences are kept in mind, it would be hard for any one to indulge in vile thinking or wicked activities. The resultant consequence would scare him away from that. People would then tend to be virtuous, and happiness would prevail everywhere.

Te Te Bhogya Visheshnän, Sthänak Dravya Swabhäv;
Gahan Vät Chhe Shishya Ä, Kahi Sankshepe Säv.

There are places for bearing the respective consequences depending upon the nature of Karma. O' pupil, this is rather an intricate matter and has been stated here in brief. (86)

Explanation & Discussion:

Every living being is seen as undertaking some activity. As such, there are innumerable activities and infinite types of Karma. The question may therefore arise whether there could be enough number of places where the consequences of all such Karmas can be extended to different souls. Are there abodes like heaven and hell, where different souls can bear the consequences of their wholesome and unwholesome Karma?

The explanation of this stanza in Vachanämrut (# 718) provides reply to the question. It points out, "There is no scope for apprehension that if God is not admitted as the dispenser of consequences and as the Creator, how can there be special locations like heaven and hell, where the consequences can be borne? One need not be skeptical on such grounds, because superb wholesome inclination constitutes the heaven, the worst unwholesome inclination constitutes the infernality, and wholesome as well as unwholesome inclination constitutes the human and animal life."

The highest form of inclination is thus the supreme abode, the worst form is the lowest abode, and the mixed form is the middle abode. The destination corresponds to the established and lasting traits of a soul. It is natural that the wholesome inclination leads upward, the unwholesome leads downward, and the mixed inclination leads to the middle level. This requires detailed understanding of the properties of sentient and Karmic matter, the situations, and such other subtle aspects. For that one needs to study the philosophy of Karma at length. This is a very intricate subject, and is stated here in brief.

Chapter 13: The Pupil's Fifth Doubt regarding Liberation

The pupil now raises the fundamental question of liberation. Most religions do not believe in ultimate liberation. Some religions treat heavenly life as a goal, but that life does not last forever. It can be retained only for a limited period. Some others consider abiding in proximity with God as liberation. Vedänt specifies an ultimate liberation that consists of the soul being merged in the all-pervading Brahman. It means that the soul ceases to have its individuality in that state. Seeking such liberation thus amounts to seeking one's own extinction. In that case, why would one feel inclined to seek it?

By now the pupil has grasped the philosophy of Karma and stands convinced that the soul acquires Karma and bears the consequences. He is now concerned about liberation, which can free the soul from the misery and unhappiness of worldly existence. The question that arises in his mind is, 'If the soul goes on acquiring Karma, how can it be liberated?' It is observed that while bearing the consequences of earlier Karma, the worldly soul reacts favorably or unfavorably to those consequences and thereby begets new Karma. In that case how can there be any end to it? The pupil therefore feels that there cannot be any possibility of its liberation from the cycle of birth and death. That problem is presented in the following two stanzas.

Kartä Bhoktä Jiv Ho, Pan Teno Nahi Moksha;
Vityo Käl Anant Pan, Vartamän Chhe Dosh.

The soul may be the acquirer of Karma and bearer (of consequences), but it cannot be liberated; infinite time has elapsed, but the fault (of acquisition of Karma) still continues to prevail. (87)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil states that the worldly soul has been acquiring Karma and bearing its consequences since the time immemorial. While bearing the consequences it reacts favorably or unfavorably to the situations that it gets from time to time, and thereby acquires new bondage. Since it is conditioned to react that way, the cycle of birth and death is going to continue forever. As such, it would be futile to think of the liberation.

The worldly soul has always been smeared with Karma. It has been under its impact since the infinity, and has been taking birth after birth to bear its consequences. Though this has been continuing since the infinity, the cycle of birth and death has not yet come to an end. As the soul cannot refrain from indulging in craving or aversion, it would continue to acquire the bondage of Karma. It is therefore not possible to visualize a time when that cycle would come to an end. Hence it is contended that the cycle is going to continue forever, and there is no possibility of the soul being freed from it.

Shubh Kare Fal Bhogave, Devädi Gatimäny;
Ashubh Kare Narkädi Fal, Karma Rahit Na Kyäny

If one does wholesome work, he would enjoy its fruits in heaven or such other states; if he does unwholesome, the fruits would be in hell etc. Nowhere can he be Karmaless. (88)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil contends that whatever the worldly soul has been doing is either good or bad. As such, it has been acquiring wholesome or unwholesome Karma. The bondage of wholesome Karma would lead to heaven or such other happy life, where it can avail the highly comfortable situations. If the bondage is unwholesome, that would lead to infernal or such other unhappy life, where it has to bear the evil consequences. As such, there is no scope for getting rid of Karma; the soul can therefore never reach the Karmaless state.

By saying that the soul can get to heaven or some other happy life by virtue of wholesome Karma, the pupil has hinted at a very pertinent point. Many people believe that by undertaking wholesome activities, they would be able to attain liberation. Most religions support that view. But Jainism specifically states that however wholesome the activities, they cannot lead to liberation. Its concept of liberation is the Karmaless state, where the soul stays in a totally unadulterated and pure state forever.

As unwholesome activities lead to bondage, so do wholesome ones. The difference lies in the nature of the consequences. The wholesome activities lead to a superior type of life, while the unwholesome ones lead to an inferior type. Since both of them cause continuation of the worldly life, they are not helpful in proceeding towards liberation. The wholesome bondage is differentiated from the unwholesome one by calling the former as shackles of gold and the latter as shackles of iron. In order to attain liberation one has to break both types of shackles.

Chapter 14: Guru's Explanation regarding the State of Liberation (Fifth Fundamental)

Every living being has desires and undertakes some activity for satisfying the same. Such activity constitutes its pursuit, which is termed as Sädhanä. One who undertakes the pursuit is Sädhak, and the object of desire is Sädhya. These three aspects are present in every activity. This holds good even in the case of apparently insignificant activities of the insects.

If a sugar grain is dropped somewhere, an ant would smell it even from a distance and would want to get it. For that purpose it would come out of its hole, and carry away the grain. In this case the ant is Sädhak; its coming out and carrying the grain is Sädhanä; and the sugar grain is Sädhya. These three aspects are thus inherent in every type of pursuit, whether it is spiritual or temporal.

Here we are concerned with spiritual pursuit. In the present case the pupil is Sädhak. He wants to undertake Sädhanä for gaining the liberation, which is his Sädhya. But he is still not sure about the feasibility of his Sädhya (liberation) and has therefore raised questions about its attainment.

He has taken into consideration the activities with good or bad inclination, but has not thought of retreating from both these modes and of staying indifferent. This is mainly due to the fact that the worldly soul undertakes every activity with some purpose in mind. There is thus the sense of attachment or resentment associated with every activity. That leads to wholesome or unwholesome bondage. Hardly does any one conceive of a state where one does everything with a detached mind, and hence does not acquire new bondage. Since old bondage is going to be stripped off in due course, one can reach the Karmaless state by resorting to detachment in every situation. The Guru now explains that state.

Jem Shubhäshubh Karmapad, Jänyä Safal Pramän;
Tem Nivrutti Safalatä, Mäte Moksha Sujän.

As you came to know about the fruitfulness of the wholesome and unwholesome Karma, so is their cessation fruitful; O' seeker, there is therefore liberation. (89)

Explanation & Discussion:

It is admitted that the activities of worldly souls are mostly wholesome or unwholesome. They are usually undertaken with a sense of attachment or resentment. That sense invariably bears fruits. If the activity is wholesome, it provides fruits in the form of good consequences; if it is unwholesome, it provides fruits in the form of bad consequences. There is, however, a third approach, which can be termed as pure. If one withdraws from the sense of attachment as well as resentment, his activity remains pure and thereby he does not acquire new Karma.

The term Nivrutti in this stanza is in the sense of such withdrawal (Detachment). Nivrutti does not mean inactivity, as some people might think. As long as one is alive, he is going to be involved in some mental or physical activity. It is therefore not possible to remain totally inactive. One can, however, remain detached while undertaking any activity. Such activity amounts to Nivrutti.

The worldly soul thus needs to cultivate a sense of detachment so as to avert the bondage of Karma. One may logically ask, 'When every activity is supposed to be fruitful, how can retreating from attachment (or resentment) remain without fruits?' The answer is that retreating from attachment would be fruitful in the form of gaining equanimity and hence not leading to any bondage. Since old Karmas are extinguished by bearing their consequences and since no new bondage occurs, one can reach the Karmaless state. That itself is liberation. The attainment of Karmalessness can therefore be termed as the fruit of such retreating.

Vityo Käl Anant Te, Karma Shubhäshubh Bhäv;
Teh Shubhäshubh Chhedatän, Upaje Moksha Swabhäv.

Infinite time has elapsed while maintaining the good or bad modes; the state of liberation arises by uprooting those good and bad modes. (90)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil had pointed out that as the worldly soul has been wandering since the infinity, it is not possible to visualize the end of that wandering. The Guru explains that infinite wandering has occurred, because during that time the soul has been living with the sense of good or bad. If it perceives some object or situation as good, it gets attached to that; and if it considers it as bad, it resents the same. This amounts to indulging in craving and aversion, and that has led to its wandering from birth to birth.

If the soul now realizes that attachment as well as resentment are not in tune with its true nature and are the causes of continuing birth and death, it would change its

approach. It would cultivate a sense of detachment. Then it would not react to any situation with attachment or resentment and would remain equanimous in every situation. Thus it would not incur new bondage. Such equanimity leads to the state of liberation.

> ***Dehädic Sanyogano, Ätyantic Viyog;***
> ***Siddha Moksha Shäshvat Pade, Nij Anant Sukh Bhog.***

With the ultimate dissociation of the soul from connection with the body, etc. it eternally stays in the liberated state and experiences its own infinite bliss. (91)

Explanation & Discussion:

Liberation literally means freedom from bondage. Attachment for worldly situations constitutes the bondage and that bondage leads to different situations of happiness or unhappiness, pleasure or pain, etc. As the worldly soul reacts to such situations with a sense of craving and aversion, it acquires new bondage of Karma. Liberation means freedom from all such bondage so that the soul can experience its true state of infinite perception, infinite knowledge, and infinite bliss.

Liberation is the utmost abstract state, which is nearly impossible to put into words. Shrimad has described it in two stanzas of Apoorva Avasar (Vachanämrut # 738). Stanza 17 describes it as "Free from mental, verbal, and physical particles of Karma and from all connections with the lifeless objects, so that the highly graceful, blissful, and totally unbinding state may prevail without any interaction". In stanza 18 it is described as "The state where there is no contact with a single lifeless particle, which is free from all faults and is unoscillating, pure, immaculate, conscious, unique, unalterable, intangible, and innate". In the Letter of Six Fundamentals (Appendix-II), the state of liberation has been described as under.

"The soul is described as being Kartä of material Karma and thus subject to the consequences. Those Karmas can, however, be terminated as well; because even if the prevailing defilement etc. are very acute, they can be reduced by discontinuing their practice, by avoiding their contact, and by calming them down. They are reducible and can be destroyed. The state of bondage thus being destructible, the pure nature of soul, devoid of the bondage, is the state of liberation."

Of the three types of activities of the soul described in the third Fundamental, the second one associated with defiling instincts results in the bondage of Karma. The worldly soul is used to indulge in anger, arrogance, etc. whenever the circumstances arise. Such indulgence can be reduced, if one tries to calm down the defilement by cultivating the sense of forgiving, modesty, etc. Thus the defiling instincts can go down by averting the same and by avoiding the repetition.

What can be reduced can also be destroyed. If the soul stays perfectly vigilant, it can avoid new bondage. Since the old Karmas are automatically stripped off after extending their consequences, its bondage can come to an end. The soul acquires the embodiment in order to bear the consequences of its Karma. If there is no bondage of

Karma, there would be no need for embodiment. Such a pure, unembodied state of the soul is liberation. In that state the soul ceases to be Kartä of any Karma, because being fully enlightened, it does not indulge in any passion or defilement. Thus it retains its purity and stays in perfect bliss forever.

Liberation has been described in this stanza as the state where there is total dissociation of the soul from embodiment and related circumstances. That denotes the Karmaless state. The liberated soul thus does not have any bondage and is dissociated from all worldly aspects. It is the state where there is no connection with any lifeless particle. It is the ultimate disconnection, i.e. the reconnection is never going to take place. That state is eternal; it will never end and is infinitely blissful. The liberated soul enjoys that inherent bliss forever.

Chapter 15: Pupil's Sixth Doubt regarding the Means of Liberation

Now we come to the sixth Fundamental, which deals with the path of liberation. By treading on that path one can attain liberation specified in the fifth Fundamental. Since the path of liberation is thus a prerequisite for attainment of liberation, the question may arise, 'Why has this Fundamental been kept last?' The reply is obvious. Unless one is clear about the objective of a pursuit, how would he be inclined to pursue it? For instance, if the people know that there is a gold mine at some place, they would go there even from far off places and try to explore that possibility. When it is known that crude oil is below a certain surface, people will drill there to get the oil. Thus, if we know about anything valuable, we make efforts to get the same. Liberation is the most precious treasure that can be conceived of. We would therefore endeavor to attain it, if we know about it and know how to attain it.

It was therefore necessary to show to the pupil the impact of Karma on the worldly soul and explain that liberation is the only way to avoid the same. Now the pupil is convinced of the existence of soul, its everlastingness, its acquiring of Karma, and bearing the consequences. He is also sure that he can be free from misery and unhappiness of the worldly life by attaining liberation, and is therefore keen to know how to attain it. He does not have any doubt about the necessity of gaining liberation, but he is not sure about the right path and proper means. His purpose is to proceed on that way as quickly as possible. With that end in view, he presents his problems in following five stanzas.

Hoy Kadäpi Mokshapad, Nahi Avirodh Upäy;
Karmo Käl Anantnän, Shäthi Chhedyän Jäy?

Even if there be the state of liberation, there are no incontrovertible means.
How can Karma, prevailing since infinity, be eradicated? (92)

Explanation & Discussion:

It has been explained that the worldly soul has been living with the bondage of Karma since the infinity. The problem therefore arises. 'How can such a

long-standing bondage be destroyed?' The pupil thinks that it may not be possible to destroy all of them within one lifetime. In that case no end can be seen to the bondage of Karma, because no one knows what type of life one would get the next time and who knows whether he would be able to continue the spiritual pursuit at that time?

Further, the worldly soul is conditioned to react favorably or unfavorably to the situations that it gets from time to time. Thereby it continues to acquire new bondage. The pupil therefore states that unless there is some incontrovertible way to eradicate that long-standing bondage and to overcome the conditioning of soul, it is not possible to gain liberation. Merely knowing about liberation would thus be of little avail.

Athavä Mat Darshan Ghanän, Kahe Upäy Anek;
Temän Mat Sächo Kayo, Bane Na Eh Vivek.

Or, multiple opinions and schools of thought stipulate the path in numerous ways; it is not possible to discern which one of them is right. (93)

Explanation & Discussion:

There are many religions and schools of thought that describe the path of liberation, but they prescribe it differently. Even within a religion there are various sects holding different views. Some state that acquiring right knowledge is the path of liberation; some believe that it can be gained by renouncing the worldly life. Some hold that austerities lead to the eradication of Karma, and therefore insist upon observing the same to the maximum possible extent. Some consider devotion to be the reliable way, while some contend that propitiating a particular deity is the way.

There are thus multiple views. The pupil has learnt about such views and knows that every one claims its point of view to be right. It is therefore a problem for him to figure out which view is correct. It seems as if he is in the midst of a maze and does not know how to come out of it. He therefore says that it is beyond his intelligence to decide which one of those views is right and should therefore be adopted.

Kai Jätimän Moksha Chhe, Kayä Veshamän Moksha;
Teno Nishchay Nä Bane, Ghanä Bhed E Dosh.

Which creed leads to liberation and which attire leads to it? It is not possible to decide it because of the multiplicity of views. (94)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil continues to describe his problem. There are too many sects, and each of them states that the path of liberation lies within its perimeter. Some state that aspirants belonging to a particular caste or creed are eligible for liberation. Some restrict the eligibility to males only. Many of them also insist upon a particular dress for the spiritual aspirants. There are also different opinions about the color of dress. Hindu monks insist on saffron color, Buddhists insist on a yellowish tinge; Jain Shwetambars insist on a white garb, while Digambars insist upon nakedness. Since there are too many differences on such issues, it is not possible to decide which belief is right and which needs to be followed.

Tethi Em Janäy Chhe, Male Na Moksha Upäy;
Jivädi Jänyä Tano, Sho Upakär Ja Thäy?

It therefore seems that we cannot get to the means of liberation; then what purpose is served by knowing about the soul and related matters? (95)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil feels that it may not be possible to figure out the right path and the means of liberation. In that case one cannot pursue the objective of liberation, and will therefore have to stay in the worldly life. As such, knowing about soul, its acquiring of Karma, bearing the consequences etc. would be of no use. That knowledge would be worthwhile, only if it can be used for attaining the liberation; otherwise it is not going to serve any useful purpose.

This does not mean that the pupil seriously thinks that there is no reliable way of attaining liberation. After learning about the liberation, he feels sure that there must be a path for attaining it. He is intent upon pursuing that path, and therefore in the next stanza requests the Guru to indicate the true path.

Pänche Uttarthi Thayun, Samädhän Sarväng;
Samjun Moksha Upäy To, Uday Uday Sadbhägya.

The first five replies have entirely cleared my doubts; now if I make out the right means of liberation, it would be my good fortune. (96)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil states that he is completely satisfied with the replies to the questions that he had raised regarding the first five Fundamentals. He is now confident that the Guru's explanation about the path and means of liberation would also be equally satisfactory. He therefore states that if he understands the path of liberation, he would consider it his good fortune and would earnestly proceed on that path.

The pupil knows that the opportunity to understand the right path arrives very rarely. By virtue of wholesome Karma one may get health, wealth, good family, etc. But all such aspects are temporary; none of them stays forever. Only the conviction of truth at the bottom of the heart stays and is carried to the subsequent life. It is due to the rise of very wholesome Karma that the pupil has got the opportunity to learn the truth. He therefore feels excited that his present life could be put to use for realizing that truth. For that purpose, he requests the Guru to show the right path and the means of liberation.

Chapter 16: Guru's Exposition about the Path and Means of Liberation (Sixth Fundamental)

The Guru has noticed that the pupil earnestly desires to proceed on the path of liberation. When a Guru gets such a pupil, he is pleased and is willing to teach him. The truly knowledgeable ones are actually looking for the right pupils to whom they can pass on their knowledge. The fountain of knowledge spontaneously starts flowing towards the deserving pupils. The Guru is therefore ready to show the right path to this pupil. In the Letter of Six Fundamentals (Appendix-II) that path has been described as under.

"There are means for attaining liberation. If the bondage of Karma continues to take place, its cessation would never be possible. But there are obvious means like knowledge, conviction, soul-oriented life, detachment, devotion, etc., which are the opposites of that bondage. By the intensity of those means the bondage of Karma becomes slack, is calmed down, and is destroyed. As such, knowledge, conviction, restraint, etc. are the means of liberation."

For gaining liberation one should avoid whatever can cause the bondage. The first step is to avoid ignorance. All living beings instinctively tend to identify themselves with their bodies. The human beings are endowed with discernment (Vivek), by exercising which one can learn that the embodiment and all the surrounding aspects are temporary, while the soul stays forever. Such learning is termed as right knowledge.

That learning, however, may not enable him to undertake right activity, because he would be lacking the conviction. He therefore needs to acquire firm faith about the true nature of soul. Thereby he gains the insight to understand what is right and what is wrong. That is called right perception. He then realizes that defiling instincts are unbecoming to him. For overcoming them he tries to restrain them, develops detachment towards the worldly phenomena, contemplates over the true nature of soul, and increasingly stays tuned to it. That leads to devotion towards the omniscient Lords as well as to the Guru. It is therefore said that knowledge, conviction, restraints, detachment, devotion, etc. constitute the path of liberation.

The Guru is aware that a brief explanation would not serve the purpose of the pupil. It may not be enough for him to undertake the journey on the path of liberation. The pupil may stumble somewhere on account of inadequacy of knowledge and understanding. The path of liberation is therefore described at length in the following 22 stanzas. These stanzas can be divided in three groups. The first group consists of 11 stanzas that explain the concept of liberation, types of Karma, and how the same can be overcome. The second group consists of the subsequent six stanzas that stipulate the stages on the road to liberation. The remaining five stanzas mainly relate to the attainment of perfect purity.

Pänche Uttarni Thai, Ätmä Vishe Pratit;
Thäshe Mokshopäyani, Sahaj Pratit E Rit.

As you are convinced at heart about the five replies, so will you be easily convinced of the means of liberation. (97)

Explanation & Discussion:

From the questions of the pupil the Guru has figured out that the pupil has become impatient to understand the path of liberation. He therefore advises him to calm down. The real problem was at the stages of earlier Fundamentals. Most of the aspirants generally get stuck at those stages. Here the pupil is entirely convinced of those five Fundamentals. Shrimad has therefore used the phrase, "Thai Ätmä Vishe Pratit." It means that the conviction has reached the deep level within; it does not merely remain at the superficial level. That happens only if one contemplates at length about what he has heard or read. The pupil has contemplated at length over what the Guru has said. Thereby the conviction of the first five Fundamentals has reached deep into his heart.

This type of conviction indicates the worthiness of the pupil. It shows that he was not asking the questions for the sake of curiosity, nor was he inquiring as a leisurely pastime. He is serious about the spiritual pursuit. When a Guru notices such sincerity, he feels pleased. His mind opens up and what he says comes from his soul. The Guru has noticed that the pupil deserves to be taught and therefore explains the path and means of liberation with utmost clarity.

In the beginning the Guru tells the pupil that since he has been fully convinced of the first five Fundamentals, it would not be hard for him to understand the sixth. The term used here is `Sahaj', which means that the conviction will occur at ease; it will naturally occur. Since the pupil has now no doubt about first five fundamentals, he is in a position to understand the path easily. The verb Thäshe means will happen; it is meant to assure the pupil about understanding of the path.

Karmabhäv Ajnän Chhe, Mokshabhäv Nijväs;
Andhakär Ajnän Sam, Näshe Jnänaprakäsh.

The state of Karma is ignorance, while abiding in the Self is liberation; ignorance is darkness and is destroyed by the light of knowledge. (98)

Explanation & Discussion:

Here Shrimad has described two opposite states. One relates to staying with the worldly situations resulting from Karma. That is termed here as Karmabhäv. The other relates to abiding in the true state. That state leads to liberation, and is therefore termed as Mokshabhäv. So

long as one remains inclined towards the state of Karma and its consequence, the state of liberation cannot arise. Those two are mutually exclusive aspects. On account of one's Karma one gets a body, sense organs, etc. But all those aspects are temporary; they do not form the parts of the true Self. For instance, if some one asks me: "Who are you?" I would reply that, "I am Manu". That reply is right to the extent it shows my worldly identification, but that is not my true and lasting identification. Identification with the body arises out of ignorance about my true Self. Such ignorance constitutes Karmabhäv, which is considered here as comparable to darkness.

While giving that reply I should really keep in mind that the body, which is known as Manu, is a temporary phenomenon arising by virtue of some Karma. That is not real 'me'. I am the everlasting soul imbibed with infinite perception, knowledge, etc. If I stay with that concept, it is called Mokshabhäv. That is the right sense and is compared here with light. Darkness cannot be removed by hitting it with a club or any other instrument. It can be easily removed by lighting a lamp. Similarly the darkness of ignorance can be removed by lighting the lamp of enlightenment.

Karmabhäv can also be interpreted differently. Many people contend that they would like to avoid all sorts of defilement and proceed on the path of liberation, but previous Karma comes in the way and that does not allow them to go ahead. Such contention also amounts to Karmabhäv. They overlook the fact that the soul is imbibed with infinite vigor. The strength of Karma, however intense it may be, cannot stand against the rightly exercised vigor of soul. Not to exercise that vigor on the pretext of Karma is Karmabhäv.

On the other hand, some people feel too sure of their capabilities and remain action-oriented. They think that they can do whatever they like. They try to go by the slogan 'Nothing is impossible'. It is true that the soul has infinite capability, but that is lying latent at present. One therefore needs to endeavor for manifesting the same. To talk of overcoming Karma, without manifesting the latent vigor, is to overlook the present state. Such undue reliance on one's capability is a different type of Karmabhäv.

Shrimad has virtually explained the entire path of liberation in this stanza. It states that the identification with the body is the ignorance of soul and that Karmabhäv is the root cause of worldly life. What is therefore required is to light the lamp of enlightenment, with which the darkness of ignorance can be eradicated. The rest of the description in this chapter is in elaboration of what has been said in this stanza.

Je Je Käran Bandhnän, Teh Bandhno Panth;
Te Käran Chhedak Dashä, Mokshapanth Bhav Ant.

Whichever are the causes of bondage, they constitute the road to bondage; the state that uproots those causes constitutes the path of liberation and the end of embodiment. (99)

Explanation & Discussion:

If some thing is to be accomplished, one has to avert the factors that might be coming in the way. The bondage of Karma operates as an impediment to the attainment of liberation. It is therefore obvious that one needs to avert the factors that cause the bondage.

Wrong perception, absence of restraint, indolence, defiling passions and undue exercising of body, mind, and speech are the five main factors that lead to bondage. Of those five factors, wrong perception is the first and foremost. It does not allow the worldly soul to look towards its true nature. That wrong perception is removed with the emergence of right perception. It can arise by destruction of three subcategories of wrong perception and by overcoming four intense categories of anger, arrogance, deception, and greed, which are the infinitely lasting defilements. Since right perception cannot emerge so long as these seven categories prevail, one should try to get rid of the same in order to gain the right perception.

Thereafter one has to adopt restraints in order to overcome the other categories of defilement and avert indolence to the extent possible. The restraints are also helpful in regulating physical, mental and verbal activities. All these factors can be brought under control by enlightenment and the endeavor in light thereof. As such, the enlightened state and the right endeavor constitute the path of liberation. That leads to the end of the cycle of birth and death.

Räg, Dwesh Ajnän E, Mukhya Karmani Granth;
Thäy Nivrutti Jehathi, Te Ja Mokshano Panth.

*Craving, aversion, and ignorance constitute the principal knots of Karma; receding therefrom constitutes the sure path of liberation. (*100)

Explanation & Discussion:

Staying under the influence of deluding Karma is the principal cause of bondage. Craving, aversion, and ignorance of the Self are the main constituents of deluding Karma, which is the toughest of all. It is relatively easy to overcome the bondage of other Karmas that obscure and obstruct. The deluding Karma stays tough because of the prevalence of

the above three factors. They are therefore mentioned here as principal knots of bondage. That bondage can be removed by breaking the knots.

Everything moves smoothly if there are no knots. For instance, when one is sewing, the thread moves smoothly so long as there are no knots. As soon as a knot occurs, the sewing stops. The person has to remove the knot before going ahead with the work. In routine life also we can maintain good relations with others, so long as there are no knots in the mind. Once there is a knot, the relation gets strained. In order to make it smooth again, we need to get rid of the knot.

Similarly the task of overcoming Karma could be smooth but for three knots of craving, aversion and ignorance. We need to strive hard to remove those knots. Since the time immemorial we are used to harbor likes and dislikes for different individuals. That happens even when we come across some one for the first time. It shows that we have good or bad impression at the internal level. If the impression is favorable, we start liking him, and that can lead to attachment for him. If the impression is unfavorable, we detest and try to avoid him. Such attachment and resentment constitute the knots that lead to the bondage of Karma.

Likes and dislikes occur in other situations as well. We get various types of favorable or unfavorable situations as the result of our previous Karma. None of those situations is going to last forever. If therefore we stay equanimous in all the situations, we do not acquire new Karma. But by virtue of our conditioning we happen to crave for the situations that we perceive as favorable, and detest those which we perceive as unfavorable.

The third factor is ignorance. The term ignorance does not mean devoid of knowledge. No soul can ever be entirely devoid of knowledge. One can, however, be short of knowledge. Such shortage occurs on account of the influence of knowledge-obscuring Karma, which can be overcome by making enough efforts. But that Karma is not relevant in the present context.

Here ignorance denotes wrong or misleading knowledge, which is expressed in spiritual terminology as Mati-Ajnän, Shrut-Ajnän, etc. It means that the person concerned is intelligent enough to learn, and he might also have studied scriptures. But what he has learnt does not lead him to the truth or to the right path. In other words, he has not correctly understood or grasped what he has learnt. A bare knowledgeable person, whose state has been described in the first and second chapters, generally belongs to this category.

Such ignorance arises on account of perception-deluding Karma, and in turn it becomes instrumental in acquiring new deluding Karma. Because of delusion one forsakes his true nature and identifies himself with the conditions that he gets from time to time. That false identification leads him to do what is not in the interests of his true well being. Such activity results in acquisition of Karma.

So long as one indulges in craving and aversion or stays with ignorance, he is going to acquire new deluding Karma and the cycle of embodiment will continue to operate. When these three factors are overcome, one gains right perception. Thereby he is induced to overcome the character-related deluding Karma, and will adopt restraints. That is the path of liberation; that is the heart of Karma philosophy, which Shrimad has presented in this stanza.

Ätmä Sat Chaitanyamay, Sarväbhäs Rahit;
Jethi Keval Pämiye, Mokshapanth Te Rit.

The way, one can realize the pure, everlasting conscious soul,
devoid of all illusions, constitutes the path of liberation. (101)

Explanation & Discussion:

Staying within the pure nature of soul constitutes liberation. Here Shrimad pinpoints Sat and Chaitanya as the main attributes of soul. Sat means everlasting. Whatever stays forever is therefore called Sat. It denotes eternal existence. Jainism describes six basic substances which stay forever. Of those six, we are concerned here with soul. It always continues to exist and retains its inherent nature. This is true even for the worldly souls. Such souls appear to be contaminated by Karma, but that contamination is a superficial temporary phenomenon. It is a Paryäy, a continually changing state, which does not affect the basic purity and inherent nature of soul. If the nature of soul could be contaminated, it could never get rid of it and hence can never be liberated. Since infinite souls have attained the liberation by eradicating the bondage of Karma, it is clear that the inherent nature of soul remains the same forever.

Chaitanya denotes consciousness, which is the inherent property of soul. It indicates knowing capability. By virtue of consciousness the soul can exercise its vigor to know, and remains aware of itself as well as of others. Of all the six substances, only soul has this property of knowing. That property stays with it forever, because no substance can be devoid of its inherent property. In the case of the worldly souls, this property remains obscured on account of the impact of Karma. As such, its capability to know infinitely is not manifested. Every living being,

however, possesses some degree of knowing capability. This is true even of one-sensed beings. If a soul could lose that capability altogether, it would turn into a lifeless substance.

Every soul is thus imbibed with the properties of everlastingness and consciousness; no soul can be devoid of that. The worldly soul is not conscious of its capabilities, because those capabilities are not manifest at present and stay latent. The soul seems to have forsaken the same and stays with the illusion of being devoid of those capabilities. Illusions are, however, not true. If a traveler, for instance, pursues a mirage in search of water, he will never get it. The earlier he gets disillusioned, the better would it be for him.

Similarly the worldly soul stays in illusion about itself. By its wrong perception and identification with the body, it considers itself as mortal and devoid of knowledge. Therefore it tries to gain knowledge from the external sources. Even those, who look for the soul, tend to identify it with the sense organs or with respiration, etc. Only a few go ahead and undertake meditation for realizing the soul.

During meditation if one happens to see a bright light or such other phenomena, he may think of having realized the soul. But most of such experiences occur out of fantasy. Such fantasies cannot lead to the true objective. One should therefore be careful and not be carried away by any of them. He should make every possible effort to stay away from all the illusory impressions and try to realize the true properties of soul. To be awakened to the natural properties and to stay continually aware of it amounts to liberation. Therefore it is said here that the way, one realizes his true properties of everlastingness, consciousness, purity, etc. without any illusion, constitutes the path of liberation.

Karma Anant Prakärnän, Temän Mukhye Äth;
Temän Mukhye Mohaniya, Hanäy Te Kahun Päth.

Karmas are of infinite types, of these there are mainly eight; deluding Karma is the principal of them. Let me show how to destroy it. (102)

Explanation & Discussion:

Every activity, whether it is physical, mental, or verbal, results in Karma. Since each activity has its own peculiarity, there can be as many types of Karma as the number of activities. There could thus be infinite types of Karmas. The seers have specified 148 (Another version states 158) categories of Karma. All of them can, however, be classified in 8 broad divisions. Four of them are called Ghäti, in the sense that they

adversely affect the capability of soul. The remaining four are called Aghäti, because they do not adversely affect the capability of soul. Knowledge-obscuring, perception-obscuring, deluding, and obstructing are the four defiling (Ghäti) categories. They can be overcome (except for the deluding Karma) by putting in enough efforts. In other words, it is not too hard to overcome the impact of obscuring, and obstructing Karmas.

The deluding category, as the name suggests, is delusive. That deludes the worldly soul, whereby it thinks and perceives wrongly. This is comparable to the situation of a drunkard. If one has taken too many drinks, he loses his sense of judgment. He thinks of different persons and of various objects the way they are not. He loses his discernment and may even think of his wife as being his mother or vice-versa. He thus remains under delusion on account of the impact of drink. Similarly the worldly soul fails to have the right understanding of Self due to the impact of deluding Karma. Under that impact it forsakes its true nature and identifies itself with the body. Thereby it tends to overlook its true nature and considers the well-being of the body as the only objective.

Under the influence of deluding Karma one thus tries to look for happiness where it does not lie. He does not realize that different worldly situations arise as consequence of his earlier Karma and that they have no capability to provide happiness. He therefore indulges in the sense of attachment for situations that he thinks are the sources of happiness and in resentment for those he considers otherwise. Thereby he acquires new Karma and continues to wander in the cycle of birth and death. It is therefore said here that the deluding Karma is the most hurtful, and one needs to make all possible efforts to overcome it. The way to overcome the same is given in the next stanza.

Karma Mohaniya Bhed Be, Darshan Chäritra Näm;
Hane Bodh Vitarägtä, Achook Upäy Äm.

Deluding Karma is of two types, pertaining to perception and behavior; they can be destroyed by enlightenment and detachment; that is the unfailing remedy. (103)

Explanation & Discussion:

The deluding Karma is of two types. One pertains to perception, which is termed as Darshan Mohaniya; the other pertains to practice which covers character and behavior. That is termed as Chäritra Mohaniya. The perception-deluding Karma does not allow one to perceive correctly. Thereby he stays away from the right understanding. He therefore cannot exercise the discernment to make out what is right and what is wrong. That

is termed as Mithyätva, which is the root cause of the worldly wandering.

That situation changes when one knows about the truth from a true Guru. For that purpose he should be eager to know the truth and be lucky enough to come across a true Guru. If he recognizes the importance of such a Guru, he would develop reverence and respect for him. In that case he would listen to and ponder over what the Guru states. The light may thereby dawn upon him and he may realize that what he had been thinking till then was wrong.

Such realization leads him to understand that he is not the body, which is an ephemeral and ever-changing apparatus. He realizes that he is pure, everlasting soul, imbibed with infinite knowledge and infinite perception. Such enlightenment is termed in this stanza as Bodh. That can come only from a true Guru. The words of the Guru emanate from the soul and are capable to penetrate the heart of the pupil. It can awaken the worldly soul from the deep slumber that he has been indulging in since the time immemorial. It enables him to discern right and wrong, and such discernment itself is right perception. One can thus overcome the perception-related deluding Karma and comes to the right path. Utmost emphasis has therefore been laid in the scriptures on the necessity of gaining the right perception.

The perception-deluding Karma perverts thinking and creates delusion about the soul's true properties. Soul is inherently imbibed with infinite happiness, but the impact of the said Karma does not allow it to perceive that and leads it to look for happiness from worldly objects. That situation changes with the overcoming of wrong perception. One is now in a position to make out the real truth. He realizes that he is not the continually changing body, but he is the everlasting soul. He therefore sets the well being of his soul as the objective.

The built-in prejudices, conditioning, strong habits, etc. may, however, come in his way. But he makes out that such factors operate as the consequence of the character-related delusive Karma that needs to be overcome. By virtue of right perception he recognizes those factors as hurting his own Self and tries to overcome the same. As the perception becomes increasingly clear, he realizes that his getting attached to or resenting any worldly situation is the principal cause of acquiring the bondage of Karma. Thus he develops detachment to an ever increasing extent. Ultimately his detachment reaches a level, when he can stay free from all sorts of attachment or resentment. It is therefore said here that enlightenment and detachment are the infallible ways to overcome perception-related and character-related deluding Karmas respectively.

Karmabandh Krodhädithi, Hane Kshamädic Teh;
Pratyaksha Anubhav Sarvane, Emän Sho Sandeh?

The bondage of Karma arising from anger, etc. can be destroyed by forgiveness, etc. That is the evident experience of every one; how can there be any doubt about it? (104)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil had raised the question as to how infinitely prevailing Karmas can be uprooted. One should remember that though the worldly soul has been bound with Karmas since the infinity, there is not a single Karma that prevails infinitely. The bondage of Karma has a time limit and is stripped off after extending the consequences. But while bearing such consequences the worldly soul happens to acquire new Karma and the bondage continues. If one does not acquire new Karma, the old Karmas will be extinguished on their own after availing the consequences.

The Guru here points out how the character-related deluding Karma can be overcome. The impact of that Karma is experienced in the form of defilement, which is termed as Kashäy. Craving (Räg) and aversion (Dwesh) are the two basic Kashäys. Jain tradition classifies them in four categories of anger, arrogance, deception, and greed. They can be overcome by developing the opposite attributes. Anger can be overcome by forgiveness, arrogance by modesty, deception by straightforwardness, and greed by contentment. Thus the surest way to overcome those passions is to resort to the opposite attributes.

Some people may doubt whether those Kashäys can be effectively overcome by developing the above mentioned attributes. For explaining their effectiveness let us take the instance of anger, which includes the sense of jealousy, animosity, vengeance, ferocity, etc. It generally arises when we find someone not behaving properly or something not happening to our expectation. But becoming angry on that account cannot serve any purpose.

Instead of that, if we forgive the person concerned and calmly explain how he was wrong, he may realize his mistake and may remain careful not to repeat it. When we become angry, not only may we hurt the person with whom we might be angry, but we hurt ourselves also by defiling our mind. We lose our own peace of mind and feel unhappy. If one realizes that much, it would not be hard for him to practice forgiveness. Similarly it is possible to overcome ego and arrogance by developing modesty, deception by straightforwardness, and greed by contentment.

Chhodi Mat Darshantano, Ägrah Tem Vikalpa;

Kahyo Märga Ä Sädhashe, Janma Tehanä Alpa.

Giving up strong opinions and view points about beliefs and ideology, one, who follows the above mentioned path, shall have to take few births. (105)

Explanation & Discussion:

Worldly souls have been holding different opinions and beliefs about true well being. Many of them hold very strong attitude and insist that their viewpoints are right. If, however, one tries to find out why he has been subject to wandering and analyzes all the relevant factors, he can make out that his insistence on the wrong viewpoint has been the most important factor. Though the worldly souls stay far away from the truth, every one normally holds his own concept as true. Every concept that is not well based constitutes Vikalpa. That needs to be given up, if one wants to get to truth.

It was pointed out in the second chapter how sectarian persons stick to their own viewpoints and stay away from the truth. Such sticking to one's own views and holding strong opinions amount to self-indulgence. That is not helpful in spiritual pursuit. If one gives it up and follows the path indicated by a true Guru, he would come to the right path. He, who is on the right path, is going to reach the destination sooner or later. He would thus be absolved from taking infinite births. It is therefore said here that such an aspirant would have only a few births to take prior to being liberated.

Shatpadanän Shatprashna Ten, Poochhyän Kari Vichär;
Te Padani Sarvängatä, Mokshamärga Nirdhär.

Contemplating over the six Fundamentals, you raised six questions; the totality of those Fundamentals constitutes the sure path to liberation. (106)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil here was desirous to learn the truth and had therefore raised questions pertaining to six Fundamentals. Since they have now been satisfactorily explained, he can make out that all six of them are essential for spiritual uplift. Not a single one is to be left out. If one does not believe in the existence of soul or its eternity, there would be no reason to seek anything. Similarly if one does not believe in Karma and its consequences, he would not be required to do anything to be freed from it. The same way one has to believe in liberation and the way to attain it. Thus the six Fundamentals together constitute the path to liberation.

The Letter of Six Fundamentals (Appendix-II) therefore states at the outset that those Fundamentals have been termed by the enlightened persons as the abodes of right perception. Towards its end it is emphasized, "The spiritually-oriented people would find them accurate and totally convincing. These Fundamentals are beyond doubts, and the discernment arising therefrom is meant for realizing one's true nature." The deeper one dwells, the more would he realize the truth underlying them. That would give rise to right perception, and by resorting to it one can proceed on the path of liberation. What is really required for liberation is to know and adopt the right path. There need not be any difference of opinions or views about it.

Jäti Veshano Bhed Nahi, Kahyo Märga Jo Hoy;
Sädhe Te Mukti Lahe, Emän Bhed Na Koy.

There is no discrimination of caste or attire in the said path; whoever pursues it, attains liberation; there is no difference of opinion therein. (107)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil had raised the issue of caste, creed, and attire in which one can attain liberation. The Guru tells him that all those aspects are immaterial. Even a person belonging to a so-called lower caste can attain liberation. For instance, Metäraj Muni, who was a Ganadhar of Lord Mahavir, was raised in a very low family. Harikeshi Muni mentioned in Uttarädhyayan Sutra also came from a very low caste.

In this connection it would be interesting to point out that Jainism admits the possibility of attaining liberation in different traditions. Sthänäng Sutra mentions 15 types of liberated souls, depending upon their last life. One of them relates to those coming from the female sex, another from a lay life and another from non-Jain tradition. Shrimad has therefore stated on several occasions that one need not insist on being called a Jain. The first part (Stanzas 97-107) of this chapter dealing with the path of liberation ends here.

Kashäyani Upashäntatä, Mätra Moksha Abhiläsh;
Bhave Khed Antar Dayä, Te Kahie Jijnäs.

One, whose defilements are calmed down, who aspires only for liberation, who has disaffection for embodiment and holds compassion within, is called a truth seeker. (108)

Explanation & Discussion:

Now starts the second part that describes the stages on the path of liberation. The first stage consists of being a truth seeker. This stanza specifies four characteristics for that purpose. Pacification or calming down of defiling instincts, aspiration for liberation, and disaffection towards the worldly life are the first three of them. It would be noticed that these three are the same as were given in stanza 38. This is mainly to emphasize the vital importance of these characteristics in spiritual pursuit. Moreover, this stanza is meant to set the first stage on the path of liberation. Since that path starts from the earnestness to learn the truth, the characteristics of truth seekers have to be specified as the requisites for the purpose.

The fourth characteristic is presented a little differently. Instead of compassion for all living beings as in stanza 38, this one specifies compassion within. This can be interpreted in two ways. One way is to interpret it as compassion lying within one's heart for all living beings. The other way is to interpret it as compassion for oneself which is more relevant here. It needs to be borne in mind that the worldly soul has been wandering on account of own faults.

If one thinks about the pain and distress that he might have suffered during the innumerable births that he has taken, it would cause him to shudder. It is said that the bones of all the embodiments of one soul would make a mountain higher than the Himalayas. Similarly the tears shed on the occasions of the departure of his relatives during different births would exceed the quantity of water in all the oceans. What a pitiable condition arising out of one's own fault! It is therefore necessary that one should take pity upon the self and decide to undertake what is required for averting the pain and distress of the worldly life. These two interpretations are in no way contradictory. One, who has compassion for all beings, would surely have compassion for the Self. Similarly one, who has true compassion for the Self, is bound to extend the same to others.

There is also a difference of terminology between the two stanzas. In place of specifying those four aspects as the state of Ätmärthi (as in stanza 38), this stanza calls them the attributes of Jijnäsu, which means one who is intent to know the truth. For all practical purposes, however, Ätmärthi and Jijnäsu convey the same sense; both are therefore termed here as truth seekers.

Te Jijnäsu Jivne, Thäy Sadgurubodh;
To Päme Samakitne, Varte Antarshodh.

If such a truth seeker gets enlightenment from a true Guru, he can acquire right perception and would turn introvert. (109)

Explanation & Discussion:

Once a person qualifies to be a truth seeker, he can easily make out what Guru teaches. It should be noted that the worldly soul must have come across true Gurus during its infinite wandering: it might also have been in the assemblies of the omniscient Lords. The teachings of Gurus and the sermons of Lords, however, did not help, because the soul did not have the necessary background (The characteristics mentioned in the preceding stanza); it did not have the receptivity to grasp the truth.

The aspirant, who has the receptivity, can get enlightenment from the teaching of a true Guru. It would make him think that he had so far wrongly identified himself with the body, and had failed to see the truth on account of his ego and attachment for the worldly aspects. He would now rely upon the Guru and follow his precepts. This is termed here as Samakit. That is the first phase of right perception, which can also be termed as Vyavahär Samakit.

Mat Darshan Ägrah Taji, Varte Sadgurulaksha;
Lahe Shuddha Samakit Te, Jemän Bhed Na Paksha.

Giving up beliefs, ideology, and strong opinion, if one acts as directed by a true Guru, he attains pure perception. This is beyond all differences and disputes. (110)

Explanation & Discussion:

The worldly souls have been living with different beliefs and ideologies that they might have inherited or gained from the sectarian or wrong gurus. Therefore the concepts that they might have formed about spiritual pursuit or about the nature of omniscient and liberated souls are not likely to be true. The people, however, tend to stick to the traditional aspects. That shows the conceited mentality, which constitutes the major obstruction in getting to the right path. Sticking to one's own viewpoint keeps the person away from the truth, and that is the main hurdle in getting on the path of liberation. One therefore needs to give up his beliefs, opinions, etc. and resort to the right Guru in order to learn the truth.

Here the pupil has adopted that approach. He has given up his earlier concepts and beliefs, and has gone to the shelter of true Guru. He has pondered over the Guru's teaching, and has realized that his own true nature is beyond the physical state. As such, he tries to stay away from the likes and dislikes, from the sense of exultation or grief, from any worldly object or situation. He seriously contemplates over his true nature. Such contemplation can lead to a glimpse of pure unadulterated consciousness. That is, of course, a momentary experience, but the

aspirant can never forget its taste. That constitutes the second phase of right perception.

Varte Nij Swabhävano, Anubhav Laksha Pratit;
Vrutti Vahe Nij Bhävmän, Paramärthe Samakit.

When there prevail the experience, awareness and conviction of one's own nature; and when the tendency flows inward, it is termed as right perception in the absolute sense. (111)

Explanation & Discussion:

As the aspirant progresses on the spiritual path, he may increasingly experience the consciousness flowing within. That experience of true nature is identical to all spiritual aspirants, irrespective of the creed they may belong to. It is blissful experience from which one would not like to turn back.

Because of the limitations of embodiment, however, one's attention would be drawn towards the physical needs of the body. But he does not forsake the taste of the truthful state while attending to the physical aspects. He remains aware of the blissful state even while undertaking the activities like eating, making movements, etc. His involvement in all such activities is analogous to an actor playing a given role on stage. In other words, the aspirant continues to remain aware of his true state.

Being the embodied soul, one might also get more involved in physical aspects. He needs to sleep, and the experience and awareness of the Self might not be maintained that time. But his conviction about being soul would not disappear. It is a fact that we remember our name even during sleep. As such, if some one calls by that name, we wake up and respond to the call. That happens because our identification with the body continues during the sleep. Similarly a spiritual aspirant with pure perception stays convinced of his true nature during sleep.

A spiritual aspirant of high level thus maintains three streams within himself. While staying tuned to soul he experiences his true nature; while being involved in physical activities, he remains mindful of his true nature; and during sleep, he retains its conviction. In spiritual terminology these three streams are called Anubhavdhärä, Lakshadhärä, and Pratitidhärä. The first stays while one remains absorbed within the self, the second stays during the period he is awake, and the third stays all the time. In other words, he never forsakes his true nature and his tendency continually remains towards that nature. That is termed here as Paramärtha Samakit, meaning the right perception in the absolute sense.

That is the third phase of right perception, which is also known as Nishchay or experiential Samakit.

Vardhamän Samakit Thai, Täle Mithyäbhäs;
Uday Thäy Chäritrano, Vitarägpad Väs.

As the perception grows, the illusion comes to the end;
with the advent of right conduct, one abides in the totally
detached state. (112)

Explanation & Discussion:

From the time one gains right perception, he starts losing interest in worldly activities and tries to stay away from indulging in defiling instincts. As such, the bondage of Karma steadily continues to go down. The impact of the character-related delusive Karma is mainly experienced in the form of anger, ego, deception, and greed. But there are varying levels of those Karmas. The most intense and grossest is category is called Anantänubandhi (infinitely lasting), which is overcome at the time of initial right perception. As the soul's purity increases, one starts overcoming the less gross forms of that Karma. When one reaches the state described in the last stanza, he gains effective control over all of them except the very subtle one known as Sanjwalan. It virtually means that the aspirant has overcome all defiling instincts. Such a person is in a position to reach the stage that the worldly soul has never attained before. It is called Apoorvakaran, meaning the unprecedented stage. That stage has been described as under by Shrimad (Vachanämrut # 738) in stanza 13 of`Apoorva Avasar (Unprecedented Occasion).

Em Paräjay Karine Chäritramohano,
Ävun Tyän Jyän Karan Apoorva Bhäv Jo;
Shreni Kshapakatani Karine Äroodhatä,
Ananya Chintan Atishay Shuddha Swabhäv Jo.

It means, "By overcoming the character-related delusion, I may come to the stage of unprecedented mode, and climbing over the destructing ladder, I may undertake the unique contemplation of extremely pure nature."

The spiritual path beyond the unprecedented stage is routed in two directions. One way is to go ahead by pacifying the extant Karma. It is known as the pacifying ladder or Upasham Shreni. The other way is to advance by destroying the Karma. That is called the destructing ladder (Kshapak Shreni), which is referred in the above stanza. The progress on the latter is swift and steady. By virtue of destruction of Karma the perception of such a person becomes perfectly clear and he becomes

totally disillusioned of the worldly aspects. All sorts of defiling instincts come to the end, and he reaches the stage known as Kshinmoh, meaning the state devoid of all delusions. The remaining subtle forms of obscuring and obstructing Karmas are overcome at the end of that stage, and the person reaches the state of total detachment and omniscience. That has been termed as Vitarägpad.

Keval Nij Swabhävanun, Akhand Varte Jnän;
Kahie Kevaljnän Te, Deh Chhatän Nirvän.

When there prevails uninterrupted awareness of one's nature exclusively, that is termed as omniscience, which is liberation despite embodiment. (113)

Explanation & Discussion:

The state of total detachment specified in the last stanza enables the person to stay aware of his true nature. When such awareness becomes exclusive and remains uninterrupted, that is termed as Kevaljnän or omniscience. Thus total detachment is the precursor of omniscience. Here the question may arise, 'The Jain tradition conceives of Kevaljnän as a totally blissful state with the capability to know infinitely, to perceive infinitely and to illuminate everything in the universe, past, present and future. As such, would the concept mentioned here not be at variance with the traditional concept?'

The pure soul is inherently imbibed with infinite knowledge, infinite perception, and infinite bliss. But those properties are implicit in remaining aware of the true nature. The question therefore remains of illumination. For that purpose let us first understand how the illumining capability functions. Its functioning is comparable to that of a mirror. As a mirror presents the image of everything that is lying in front of it, within omniscience shines out the knowledge of everything in the universe. As the mirror does not take cognizance of the image that it presents, the omniscient Lords also merely stay aware of the Self and remain indifferent to everything that reflects in their omniscience. Thus the attribute of knowing everything in the universe relates to the capability, not to the actual use thereof. The emphasis on the capability is laid in order to point out to the laymen the magnificence of omniscience. The true magnificence, however, lies in the purity of the soul itself.

It is pertinent here to quote Ächäräng Sutra (1-3-4-122). It states: "Egam Jänai Se Savvam Jänai", which means: he, who knows One (Soul), knows all. When a person knows the soul in every respect, it means that his knowing capability has attained the perfect level. Nothing remains beyond the purview of that capability. It is analogous to switching on a light in order to find something lying in the dark. Suppose that we switch on

the light to find out a ring that might have slipped from a finger. In that light not only does the ring become visible, but other objects in that area also become visible to us. Similarly the state, in which one remains fully aware of the Self, also enables him to be aware of everything. All-illumining capability is implicit in that state. The state of uninterrupted awareness thus covers all the attributes of omniscience.

That state is still embodied and does not represent liberation. But the omniscient Lords have the same level of perception, knowledge and bliss that the liberated Lords have. Moreover, since the state of liberation automatically emerges at the end of that life, the omniscient state can be termed as liberation (Nirvän) despite the embodiment. The second part (Stanzas 108-113) of this chapter comes to the end here. All the stages from being a truth seeker to the state of liberation are covered in these six stanzas.

Koti Varshnun Swapna Pan, Jägrat Thatän Shamäy;
Tem Vibhäv Anädino, Jnän Thatän Door Thäy.

As a dream of even millions of years subsides at the instance of waking, the delusion prevailing since the infinity disappears with the advent of enlightenment. (114)

Explanation & Discussion:

The worldly soul has been staying since the time immemorial with false identity with the body. As explained earlier, that false identity arises out of ignorance of its own nature. The fact that the said ignorance persists, even though the soul is inherently knowledgeable, shows that the worldly soul does not realize its consciousness and therefore continues to look for happiness from the worldly aspects. Its indulgence in that wrong mode is comparable to a dream in which one envisions unreal and imaginary situations.

Sometimes a dream may seem to prevail for an inordinately long period. One can even fantasize to have passed millions of years. All such things seem to happen during a dream. But as soon as one awakes, the dream comes to the end, and with it ends everything that seemed to happen in that state.

Similarly false identification with the body and other delusions that have been prevailing since the time immemorial also come to the end, when one becomes aware of his true nature as a result of enlightenment.

Chhoote Dehädhyäs To, Nahi Kartä Tun Karma;
Nahi Bhoktä Tun Tehano, E Ja Dharmano Marma.

If false identification with the body ceases, you are no longer Kartä of Karma, nor do you have to bear the consequences; that is the essence of religion. (115)

Explanation & Discussion:

As stated earlier, the identification of soul with the body is the root cause of acquiring Karma. That false identification generates the sense of `I', `Me', and `Mine' with different worldly connections and situations. The activities undertaken with that false identification therefore induce the Karma particles to penetrate the provinces of soul and stay there till maturity.

That situation would change when the soul realizes its true nature. Then it would automatically come out of the false identification. Worldly activities will take place thereafter as long as the embodiment continues. But the soul would not feel attachment for any of them. It would remain an indifferent spectator of whatever happens. It would not indulge in craving or aversion for any situation that may arise from time to time. Thereby it ceases to be Kartä (Actuator) of Karma and hence would not have to bear the consequences.

It is easy to understand that since such a soul does not acquire new Karma, it does not have to bear new consequences. But the question would arise about earlier Karmas that might still remain in balance. How can any soul be absolved from bearing the consequences of old Karmas? Does the inexorable law of Karma cease to operate in that case?

The law does continue to operate, but it should be remembered that the consequences of Karma are always extended to the body, not to the soul. It is only false identification that leads the soul to identify itself with the body and to feel that it undergoes the said consequences. When such identification falls off, the soul perceives and knows what happens to the body, but stays free from the pain or pleasure associated with it. It merely remains an indifferent observer. As such, it is said that the liberated soul does not bear the consequences.

There is also the possibility of mass scale destruction of the extant Karmas. As a huge stack of cotton can be burnt to ashes with a little spark, most of the Karmas are extinguished with the spark of

enlightenment. As such, getting freed from false identification is the gist of spiritual pursuit. It is therefore termed here as the essence of religion.

E Ja Dharmathi Moksha Chhe, Tun Chho Moksha Swaroop;
***Anant Darshan Jnän Tun, Avyäbädh Swaroop.*.**

Only that religion leads to liberation, you are the liberation incarnate; you are infinite perception, infinite knowledge, and unobstructed bliss. (116)

Explanation & Discussion:

The purpose of spiritual pursuit is to seek liberation. But the liberation is not to be sought from outside; it abides within and can be manifested by Self-realization. Since Self-realization can be gained by giving up identification with embodiment, it is stated here that giving up that identification leads to liberation. Self-realization is liberation incarnate. By virtue of that realization one can experience infinite knowledge, infinite perception and unobstructed bliss. Those attributes are inherent within the soul, but are not manifest at present. One can get the glimpse thereof with Self-realization.

Shuddha Buddha Chaitanyaghan, Swayam Jyoti Sukhdhäm;
Bijun Kahie Ketalun? Kar Vichär To Päm

You are pure, enlightened, consciousness incarnate, self-radiant, and abode of bliss. What else can be said? If you rightly contemplate, you would realize it. (117)

Explanation & Discussion:

The Guru points out that it is really hard to describe the state of liberation. But everything can be identified by its attributes. He therefore specifies five vital attributes of liberated soul as being pure, enlightened, full of consciousness, self-illuminating, and blissful. Let us consider them one by one.

Purity: The soul is inherently pure. It seems stained by the impact of Karma; but that is only superficial, not real. A pure crystal assumes the color of the object lying within its proximity but does not adopt that color. Similarly the worldly soul assumes the phenomena of being a male or female, or having a heavenly, human, or animal embodiment, etc. by virtue of its Karma. They merely represent temporary states, which are termed as Paryäy. All the worldly states are ever-changing Paryäys. None of them can alter the inherent purity of soul. That purity remains latent in the worldly state and becomes manifest in the liberated state.

Enlightenment: Infinite knowledge is a property of soul. It has the inherent capability to know everything. For that purpose it does not need to go to the objects that are to be known. Those objects are reflected in its knowing capability. It also does not need any external means for exercising its capability. Since that capability remains obscured by the knowledge-obscuring Karma, the soul conceives of itself as devoid of knowledge and tries to gain it with the help of sense organs. It tries to know a surface by the sense of touch, taste by the tongue, odor by the nose, sight by the eyes, and sound by the ears. That happens because the worldly soul has forsaken its infinite capability to know. That capability, however, stays within and can be experienced by getting rid of obscuring Karmas.

Consciousness: This denotes the capability to remain aware. Awareness is the attribute that belongs only to soul. No other substance has awareness. Here the term used is Chaitanyaghan, which literally means concrete consciousness. The use of the term concrete may seem contradictory, because the consciousness is intangible and cannot be concrete. But the word concrete has been used here to convey that consciousness is pure, perfect, complete, solid (No room for impurity to get in), and abides in every part of soul. We become aware of whatever happens in any part of the body, because the soul pervades the entire body. The capability of awareness is not fully manifest at present because of the impact of Karma; but it can be fully experienced in the liberated state.

Self-illumination: What shines by itself and does not need any other means for cognition is called self-illuminating. For instance, the sun is self-illuminating; no lamp is required to see the sunshine. We can make it out even from a corner of our house. Similarly soul is capable to know itself as well as other objects by virtue of its self-illumination.

Abode of bliss: Happiness and bliss are the inherent characteristics of soul. No other substance has it; the true happiness lies within. Since it is not presently experienced, we try to get the happiness from outside. But such happiness is temporary and depends upon the external factors. It would disappear when those factors disappear or are removed. True happiness is transcendental. As such, one should stay away from all external factors and cultivate detachment towards all worldly objects. That is the way for attaining the transcendental happiness. Thereby one is enabled to abide in own purity; and that is the abode of bliss.

No one can accurately describe the state of liberation. It is a subject of experience and not of words. These five attributes can give some idea of that state. After describing the same the Guru therefore says that one has to experience it in order to know the same and the way is to contemplate at length about one's true nature. Contemplation is a superb means, which can lead to the depth of soul. All the latent capabilities of soul would be awakened thereby.

Nishchay Sarve Jnänino, Ävi Atra Samäy;
Dhari Maunatä Em Kahi, Sahaj Samädhi Mäny.

Conclusions of all the enlightened ones are covered herein. So saying, the Guru assumed silence and got absorbed in innate ecstasy. (118)

Explanation & Discussion:

Whatever the Guru has said is based on the precepts and doctrines laid by all the enlightened personages. He has neither added to it nor subtracted from it. As a matter of fact, there is only one path of liberation. It is therefore said here that all the enlightened ones have only one opinion. Their knowledge converges in what has been said here. The Guru has now nothing more to say. As an enlightened person he is used to stay within himself. He had opted to speak only for the sake of the pupil. Since that work is now over, he adopted the silence and assumed the state of innate ecstasy.

Ecstasy denotes the state of beatitude. There are various levels of that state. When one experiences the peace of mind by virtue of health, freedom from worry, etc., that can be termed as ecstasy. Such ecstasy is dependent upon the external factors and is not innate. When ecstasy prevails of its own accord without any specific reason, it is termed as innate. That automatically occurs in the delusion-free state. Here the Guru assumes such innate ecstasy. The third part (Stanzas 114-118) of this chapter relating to perfect purity of soul comes to the end here.

Chapter 17: Statement of Pupil's Enlightenment

As mentioned in the last chapter the dialogue between the preceptor and the pupil came to the end, when the Guru assumed silence and ecstasy. While watching it the pupil is also induced to turn introvert. Thereby he could get a glimpse of the soul abiding within. What he had heard from the Guru regarding six Fundamentals comes to his experiential level.

In stanza 117 the Guru had stated that the pupil could realize his true nature, if he contemplated over it. The pupil did accordingly and thereby he realized his true nature. In other words, he got enlightened. Now he does not need to know anything more. But in order to be sure that what he has realized is right, he likes to state how the concept underlying six Fundamentals has been assimilated by him.

Sadgurunä Upadeshthi, Ävyun Apoorva Bhän;
Nijpad Nijmänhi Lahyun, Door Thayun Ajnän.

I gained the unprecedented sense by the teaching of your honor; I realized the true Self within myself and got rid of ignorance. 119)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil acknowledges his debt to the Guru, by whose teaching he attained enlightenment. The enlightenment abides within and is not to be gained from outside. One has to create the condition in which it can manifest. In other words, one has to be worthy of such manifestation. Such worthiness is termed as Upädän. Since the pupil's Upädän was ready, the teaching of the Guru became instrumental in bringing it out. The pupil is, however, aware that but for the guidance from Guru, he could not have manifested it. As such, he wants to acknowledge allegiance to the Guru for attaining the enlightenment.

He starts with first Fundamental relating to the existence of soul. But humble as he is, he does not state that he is enlightened. He uses the term Bhän, meaning the sense of Self. Until now he was groping in the dark and was moving around without knowing the right path. He was trying to comprehend the Self by external modes. It was his ignorance. That ignorance has been removed by the instructions of Guru and he has now been able to realize that soul abides within the body. It has come to his experiential level that the relation of soul to the body is comparable to that of a sword to its sheath or that of a coconut kernel to its outside

shell. As he had never gained that sense earlier, he calls it unprecedented.

Bhäsyun Nij Swaroop Te, Shuddha Chetanä Roop;
Ajar, Amar, Avinäshi Ne, Dehätit Swaroop.

I now visualize my nature as pure consciousness, which is
*ageless, immortal, imperishable and transcendental. (*120)

Explanation & Discussion:

He now turns to second Fundamental relating to the everlastingness of soul. For that purpose he presents four attributes of pure soul as being ageless, immortal, indestructible, and transcendental. As stated earlier, soul is an original substance, which cannot be made by any composition or combination. This is in contrast to the body, which is a composition and is subject to decomposition. Since no original substance can decompose or perish; soul is imperishable and immortal.

All compositions are subject to wear and tear. It is our experience that the body continues to wear. It grows old, ages, and goes on losing its vitality. This represents the process of a slow but steady decomposition, and the body eventually gets decomposed entirely. Soul is not subject to such process of decomposition. It stays the same forever. During its infinite wandering it has adopted the shapes of various bodies. It has faced pain and misery, which the bodies have been subjected to in different births. Regardless of that, none of its (soul's) parts has been worn, damaged, mutilated, or fallen apart. Not being subject to wear and tear, it is ageless and indestructible. Though abiding in the body for the time being, it is not a part thereof. Thus being different and distinct from the embodiment, soul is transcendental.

Most people detest the impact of aging and therefore try to cover the symptoms of graying hair, wrinkles, etc. by dyeing, cosmetics, etc. Moreover, they generally remain scared of impending death. Barring the few enlightened persons everyone thus stays in fears relating to old age, disease, death, loss of wealth, respect, status, etc. These fears arise out of considerations for the body. After realizing the true nature one can make out that he is the soul, which is ageless, indestructible, and immortal. It is unbreakable, indivisible, inviolable, and non-combustible. No external situation is capable to afflict it. As such, one feels free from fright. He has nothing to fear about. Such a person stays fearless in all the situations, which are subject to continual changes.

The phrase 'Shuddha Chetanä Roop' used in this stanza needs some explanation. It refers to awareness, which is the main attribute of soul.

When one merely stays aware of what happens and remains indifferent to everything else, he can be said to be experiencing pure consciousness, which is the same as Shuddha Chetanä. This is awareness incarnate and is termed as Jnän Chetanä. In that state it is possible to experience infinite bliss that is inherent in the soul. The pupil has now realized his own nature as being consciousness imbibed with the above-mentioned four attributes.

Kartä Bhoktä Karmano, Vibhäv Varte Jyäny;
Vrutti Vahi Nij Bhävmän, Thayo Akartä Tyäny.

When delusion prevails, one is Kartä of Karma and bears the consequences; when the tendency flows within one's own nature, he ceases to be the Kartä. (121)

Explanation & Discussion:

Now the pupil talks about third and fourth Fundamentals of being Kartä (Actuator) of Karma and bearer of its consequences. Karma occurs when one behaves beyond his nature. To know and stay aware is the nature of the soul. If one stays true to that nature, he does not acquire Karma. By virtue of delusion and the impact of Karma, however, one happens to act beyond his nature. Such action is termed as Vibhäv. Thereby one acquires Karma. As such, he becomes Kartä and has to bear the consequences.

Literally Vibhäv is the opposite of Swabhäv. Since Swabhäv denotes one's nature, Vibhäv would stand for unnatural and is generally interpreted as such. But that is not the right interpretation. Had it been right, the soul could not be conceived of indulging in Vibhäv, because nothing can go against its nature. Vibhäv is therefore interpreted here as an attribute of soul, which is beyond (not against) its nature, but which soul is capable of indulging in. If one does not go beyond, he stays within his nature. In other words, his tendency flows within and it does not result in acquisition of Karma. This was pointed out in stanza 78, where the Guru had said that if soul stays vigilant about its own property, it acts in tune with its nature; and if it does not remain so vigilant, the sense of Kartä and Karma would prevail.

Athavä Nij Parinäm Je, Shuddha Chetanä Roop;
Kartä Bhoktä Tehano, Nirvikalpa Swaroop.

Alternately, he is Kartä and avails the changes occurring within him, which are blissful and imbibed with undefiled consciousness. (122)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil continues with third and fourth Fundamentals. He says that soul can be treated as Kartä in some respect. The pure soul is absolute consciousness, which stays tuned to its property of merely knowing and witnessing. Had it been devoid of any activity in its pure state, it would be turned into a lifeless substance. Staying tuned to its nature is therefore the lasting activity of soul.

Since every activity can be termed as Karma in a special sense, unimpassioned knowing and witnessing by a pure soul can also be considered Karma. In that sense even the liberated soul would be Kartä of such Karma. Logically therefore it should bear the consequences, which it actually does in the form of experiencing the bliss. But the word bearing is a misnomer here. We can talk of the worldly soul as bearing the consequences, because it has the sense of doing something and of bearing the comforts or discomforts arising as the consequence of its Karma. The liberated soul, however, stays in perfect bliss. That can be treated as the consequence of staying within pure consciousness.

Bliss is thus the consequence of remaining within the true nature, which is availed by the liberated soul. But availing of that bliss is non-conceptual. While availing it the liberated soul has no concept of `I', `me', or `mine'. That non-conceptuality is the essence of absolute bliss. The question of bearing the consequence does not arise here. Since the liberated soul forever stays blissfully aware of its consciousness, it would simply be a formality to state that such a soul avails the said consequence.

Moksha Kahyo Nij Shuddhatä, Te Päme Te Panth;
Samajävyo Sankshepamän, Sakal Märga Nirgranth.

Liberation is self-purification; the way it is attained is the path; the entire path of the disentangled Lord has thus been explained in brief. (123)

Explanation & Discussion:

Now the pupil turns to liberation and its path, the fifth and sixth Fundamentals. The Guru had said in stanza 113 that uninterrupted awareness of the Self is omniscience. Since liberation necessarily follows it, that itself was termed as liberation. The pupil has correctly grasped that concept, and therefore states that the perfect purity of soul is liberation. In other words, the infinite purity of knowledge, perception and bliss, which are the inalienable attributes of soul, constitutes liberation. As such, it is obvious that the way such purity can be achieved, is the path of liberation. The pupil feels exhilarated that the Guru has explained in brief the entire path of liberation, which was stipulated by the omniscient Lords.

The term Nirgranth denotes one who is disentangled, one who has no knots. Knots can be external as well as internal. Inclination towards and attachment for the body, relatives and other incidental situations are external knots; while anger, ego, deception, greed, etc. are internal ones. All such knots constitute bondage, and a spiritual aspirant should

endeavor to get extricated from the same. The omniscience emerges only when all types of bondage are eradicated. This obviously involves uprooting of the knots. Since the omniscient Lords have already accomplished it, they are free from the knots or any other entanglement. They are therefore termed here as disentangled. The pupil thus concludes his understanding of the six Fundamentals.

Aho! Aho! Shri Sadguru, Karunäsindhu Apär;
Ä Pämar Par Prabhu Karyo, Aho! Aho! Upakär.

Oh! Oh! The blessed Guru! Unfathomable ocean of compassion! You have immensely obligated this down-trodden and miserable being! (124)

Explanation & Discussion:

The pupil now feels elated for the true knowledge that the Guru has passed on to him. How could it be done, unless one is equipped with perfect knowledge and wisdom? The pupil is awe-struck by the way he gained internal peace by listening to the Guru. His state could be compared to a thirsty traveler coming across a clear lake. How would the traveler feel, when he quenches his thirst with the cool water, especially if he had been traveling for long under the hot sun?

The traveler's case, however, relates to physical thirst, which is going to arise again even after being quenched. The pupil's was the spiritual thirst, which has been so quenched that it would never arise again. In other words, he has been led to the path of liberation, which he no longer has to seek. He therefore feels immeasurably obligated to the Guru and experiences an incomparable level of contentment.

A question would arise here for our consideration, 'The pupil heard from the Guru about the six Fundamentals that we so often listen or recite. How come, we do not get enlightenment?' One reason is our unworthiness and the other is the absence of personal contact with a Guru. Being in the physical presence of a Guru makes a big difference. There have been instances when people experienced realization merely by being in the presence of a Guru. This could happen, even if the Guru does not utter a single word; the accomplishment occurs merely by his presence!

Here the pupil does not merely have access to the true Guru; he has actually got the opportunity to listen to him and to get the doubts clarified. It can be imagined how much benefit he might have gained. The pupil is therefore overcome by the grace of Guru. But he does not know how to express his gratitude. As a mark of his esteem for the blessed Guru merely the utterance of "Oh! Oh!" comes out of his mouth.

Then he reflects that the uninterrupted stream of knowledge that he experienced can come out only from a high level of compassion. He remembers that compassion lies at the heart of enlightened persons. They live only for undergoing the ordained fate and for the sake of benevolence. That gives the pupil an idea of the level of compassion lying at the heart of the Guru. He finds it beyond his capacity to measure it and feels content by devoutly addressing him as the unfathomable ocean of compassion.

The pupil also remembers how ignorant he was prior to the teaching from Guru. Out of humility he terms that state as utterly down-trodden. This shows his modesty and humbleness, without which he would not have been receptive to the teaching of Guru. He feels awe-inspired as he compares his former miserable state to the highly enlightened level of the Guru. He realizes the world of difference between the two, but does not have the words to express it.

While composing Raghuvansh, the poet Kalidas had stated, "How high stands the Lord Raghu's race and how low is my intellect to describe it?" Ächärya Mäntungsuri also states in Bhaktämar Stotra, "I have very little knowledge and happen to be the source of ridicule for the learned; my devotion to you, however, forces me to utter the words of adoration!" The pupil also feels the same way, and stands in utter amazement, which he could express only by uttering oh, oh once again.

Shun Prabhu Charan Kane Dharun? Ätmäthi Sau Heen;
Te To Prabhue Äpiyo, Vartun Charanädhin.

Lord, what can I offer at your feet? Everything is trivial as compared to the soul. Even that has been bestowed by Your Lord; let me act as directed by you. (125)

Explanation & Discussion:

The Guru has given the instructions to the pupil out of innate compassion. He does not expect anything in return. But if one does something good to us, it is customary to reciprocate. This is normal courtesy. In ancient times, the pupils used to go to the preceptor's hermitage for learning. At the end of the study they would offer something to their Guru, which was known as Daxinä.

Here the pupil has gained self-realization by the teaching of the Guru, and he feels that he should offer something in return. But he cannot think of anything that can be commensurate to the teaching of Guru. After realizing the significance of soul he has lost the importance of everything in

the world. As such, he cannot conceive of any worldly object worth offering to the Guru.

As the pupil reflects over the soul, he realizes that it is unique; nothing is comparable to it. Since he realized the existence of soul by virtue of Guru's teaching, he feels as good as the soul having been granted by the Guru. Of course, that can not be returned; but he makes out that the Guru would feel happy, if he follows his precepts. To attach all possible importance to the soul, to consider everything from the point of view of its well being, and thereby to reach an ever increasing purity, constitute the right way of following the Guru. The pupil therefore makes up his mind to pursue that mode.

In spiritual pursuit it is vital to act according to the guidance and instructions of the Guru. Ächäräng Sutra therefore states, "Änäe Dhammo, Änäe Tavo" (Carrying out the instructions of the Guru and omniscient Lords is the true religion as well as penance). It is also said that the continual adoration of innate compassion of a Guru leads to realization. The scriptures even go to the extent of saying that even one word of a Guru, if properly resorted to, can lead to liberation. The pupil therefore decides to offer himself at the lotus feet of the Guru.

Ä Dehädi Äjathi, Varto Prabhu Ädhin;
Däs, Däs Hun Däs Chhun, Teh Prabhuno Deen.

From now onward, let this body, etc. behave as commanded by the Lord; and let me be a servant, very humble, the most humble servant of the Lord. (126)

Explanation & Discussion:

Thinking that he had nothing to offer to the Guru, the pupil was overtaken by his inability. He almost despised himself for not being able to do anything commensurate to teaching of the Guru. In view of the significance of carrying out the command, he at last decides to act in accordance with the commands of the Guru and to behave as his most humble servant. This shows his utmost modesty and the sense of subservience.

To Westerners such a sense of subservience may appear rather unbecoming, but Indian culture is rapt with that. There are several cases when kings have offered even their kingdoms to their Gurus. King Kumärpäl had offered the kingdom of Gujarät to his Guru Hemchandrächärya; and Shiväji had offered his kingdom to Guru Samarth Swämi Rämdäs. In both these cases the kings had taken their offerings back under the stipulation that they would reign in the interest of religion.

The pupil surrenders everything at the holy feet of the Guru, and resolves that his body, senses, mind, intellect, and everything else should prevail in accordance with the instructions and commands of the Guru. Since he does not want to waste any time for that purpose, he decides to put it into practice right away. In utmost sincerity and humbleness he thinks of and addresses the Guru as Prabhu (Lord).

Shat Sthänak Samajävine, Bhinna Batävyo Äp;
Myän Thaki Tarvarvat, E Upakär Amäp.

By explaining the six stages (Fundamentals) you have demonstrated the soul as distinct (from the body), like a sword from its sheath, and that obligation is immeasurable. (127)

Explanation & Discussion:

The Guru has removed all the doubts of the pupil pertaining to soul, and has clearly shown the soul as distinct from the body. This is comparable to a sword and a sheath. When a sword is within its sheath, its separate existence from the sheath is not visible. However, every one, even an illiterate person, knows that the sword is separate from the sheath. Moreover, whether the sheath is studded with gold or diamonds does not make any difference to the sword. It is always made of sharp steel. Similarly the soul abiding within a body is not apparent to the eyes, but its existence, separate from the body, can be understood by the spiritual insight. Whether the body is strong or weak, old or young, beautiful or ugly, male or female, make no difference to the soul. It remains the same forever.

These six Fundamentals pertain to the soul and are meant for gaining self-realization. The realization is not away from the Self, but the worldly soul has been staying away from it on account of the longings and desires arising from its identification with the body. The body is ephemeral, mortal, and subject to decomposition; while the soul is a substance on its own and stays forever. Such incompatible substances can never be the same. It is only due to delusion that they are perceived as one. That long-standing delusion has been removed by the Guru. As such his obligation in the matter could hardly be exaggerated. The pupil therefore concludes his statement by acknowledging that his debt to the Guru is immeasurable.

Chapter 18: Conclusion:

Now we come to the concluding part. The six Fundamentals have been explained to the full satisfaction of the pupil, but there are some vital aspects that might have escaped his attention. They are therefore brought out in the form of conclusion in the following stanzas. It would be noticed that most of the stanzas relate to something unique, worth remembering by heart. Some of them are worth displaying on walls as constant reminders.

Darshan Shate Samäy Chhe, Ä Shat Sthänak Mänhi;
Vichärtän Vistärathi, Sanshay Rahe Na Känyi.

All six schools of thought are covered in these six stages (Fundamentals); no doubt will linger therein, when pondered at length. (128)

Explanation & Discussion:

As it was pointed out in stanza 44, there are mainly six schools of thought and their gist is covered in these six Fundamentals. This may perhaps seem to be a tall claim, because scholars belonging to those schools have produced voluminous literature that cannot be comprehended even during the entire life time. However, the viewpoints of all of them revolve around the existence or non-existence of soul and an almighty Creator. These six Fundamentals cover those aspects and conclusively show the existence of soul and non-existence of almighty. If one contemplates over the same at length, he would realize that nothing more remains to be stated.

The information about the six schools was briefly given while explaining the above mentioned stanza 44. The voluminous literature of those different schools is full of arguments in favor of the authors' viewpoints and against those who differ from them. That is hardly necessary and what is said in this Ätmasiddhi Shästra is enough for comprehending the truth. But there is scope for elaborating what is stated therein.

Ätmabhränti Sam Rog Nahi, Sadguru Vaidya Sujän;
Guruäjnä Sam Pathya Nahi, Aushadh Vichär Dhyän.

There is no disease like self-delusion; a true Guru is an expert spiritual physician; there are no dietary restrictions like the precepts of Guru; contemplation and meditation comprise the medication. (129)

Explanation & Discussion:

This is a very important stanza, which can be considered a precious spiritual jewel. It contains the substance of the entire spiritual science. The four parts of the stanza specify four highly valuable statements that need to be kept in mind by every one.

The first part refers to Ätmabhränti, which means the delusion prevailing about the Self. Due to ignorance of the true Self the worldly beings stay deluded about their own nature. Forsaking the soul they identify themselves with the body and its surroundings. As such, they indulge in attachment for some aspects and resentment towards others. This delusion is the main disease. The physical diseases can be cured by right treatment. Even if a disease is found incurable, it ends with the death. The delusion about the Self has, however, been prevailing since the time immemorial and has been continuing birth after birth. Moreover, the worldly soul is not even aware of that disease, and therefore does not resort to the means for curing the same. As such, it is the most chronic disease.

If a person knows his disease, he goes to a doctor. If he is not aware of the disease and happens to see a doctor, the latter can diagnose the disease and provide the necessary treatment. If that doctor is an expert physician, the disease may be cured, or would at least come under control by his treatment. But how can one find a physician for the disease of delusion? The reply provided in the second part of the stanza states that a true Guru is the expert spiritual physician. The Guru has not obtained that expertise by reading or from other external sources. That expertise was within. As such, he has dived deep and attained it. He is thus the most reliable physician for the disease.

When a physician starts the treatment, he may insist upon some dietary restrictions, which can help in bringing the disease under control. That is called Pathya. For instance, a diabetic patient is advised to reduce or avoid sugar and fats. The third part of the stanza therefore states that the instructions of a Guru constitute the dietary directions for controlling the disease of delusion.

The last part deals with medication. It prescribes that contemplating over the nature of soul and meditating on the same constitute the medication to overcome the disease A spiritual aspirant should stay in meditation as long as possible. When he cannot stay therein, he should resort to contemplation. These are two primary aspects that the worldly soul needs to concentrate upon. It is obvious that no one wants to get unhappiness or to encounter death. It can therefore be surmised that every living being looks for lasting happiness and immortality. Since

these attributes are inherent within the soul, it would be helpful to ponder over the same during the contemplation and meditation.

But this is subject to the instructions and commands of the Guru. It is noticed that many people resort to contemplation and meditation, but their delusion about the Self does not disappear. This is due to the fact that they ignore the stipulation of following Guru's instructions. If one follows his instructions and resorts to the prescription of contemplation and meditation, the long standing disease of delusion would be cured. If one thinks deeply over this, he would make out that there is no other way to get rid of the delusion.

Jo Ichchho Paramärtha To, Karo Satya Purushärtha;
Bhavsthiti Ädi Näm Lai, Chhedo Nahi Ätmärtha.

Strive real hard if you want to attain the absolute truth; do not forsake the quest for truth in the name of destiny, fate, etc. (130)

Explanation & Discussion:

There are people, who wish to attain the blissful state and like to endeavor for it. There are also those, who think that every thing happens at the destined time and our endeavoring is of no avail. The theory of Krambaddha Paryäy, for instance, states that there is a strict chronological order according to which every thing happens, and it is not possible to change or modify that order. The advocates of the theory stipulate that what one needs to do is to understand the true nature of soul as well as its ultimate state of liberation and then wait for the time when that state is destined to materialize. From their point of view true understanding and willingness to wait constitute the right endeavor.

That theory gives too much importance to the time factor. Jainism states that nature (Swabhäv), right endeavor (Purushärtha), instrumental factors (Nimitta), time (Käl), and destiny (Bhavitavyatä) are the five factors that are necessary for any change to occur. Swabhäv indicates the potential of the subject to undergo a certain change. Purushärtha indicates the effort for effecting the change. Nimitta indicates the auxiliaries to be associated for bringing out the change. Käl shows the right time for the purpose, and Bhavitavyatä shows that the change is going to take place. The last one is also termed as Bhavsthiti.

All these five factors are required for effecting a change. Swabhäv is the predominant factor, because nothing can happen without the potentiality. For instance, sand does not have the potential to yield oil;

hence however much one may try, oil cannot be extracted out of sand. But this aspect has only a theoretical significance, because no one would try to do anything unless there is potential for the same.

Endeavor is therefore the first vital factor. In a way, it covers the other factors. For instance, bringing together the auxiliaries can be considered a part of the endeavor. The selection of the right time is inherent in the right endeavor, because no sensible person would make the endeavor at the wrong time. Destiny is a double edged sword. Sometimes it yields to the right endeavor and sometimes it does not. Success or failure depends upon one's Karma.

Bhavsthiti is sometimes taken as a state that leads to the end of the life cycle (Liberation). But such a state cannot come forth in the absence of right perception, and that perception cannot arise without endeavoring for the purpose. Thus endeavor (Purushärtha) is the most vital factor. Of the five factors mentioned above, that is the only factor which is under our control. The seers have therefore urged to undertake the right endeavor while assuming that the destiny will be helpful.

This stanza therefore exhorts the aspirants to resort to the endeavor for realizing the true nature. Such endeavor consists of giving up the tendency to indulge in craving or aversion for the worldly objects. One should therefore earnestly strive to overcome the sense of craving and aversion, and to avoid indulging in indolence in the name of destined fate.

Nishchay Väni Sämbhali, Sädhan Tajvän N'oy;
Nishchay Räkhi Lakshamän, Sädhan Karvän Soy.

Do not give up the means by listening to the absolute viewpoint; make proper use of the means by keeping the absolute viewpoint in mind.
(131)

Explanation & Discussion:

This stanza provides a useful hint to the people, who unduly resort to the absolute viewpoint as explained in Chapter 2. That view emphasizes the inherent nature of soul as being pure, un-interacting, unbound, unaffected, and as good as that of liberated ones. Its purpose is to indicate the true potential of soul so that one may endeavor to manifest the same. It should be remembered that though soul is inherently pure, currently it is under the impact of Karma. The existing Karmas are stripped off by bearing the consequences, but the worldly

soul indulges in craving and aversion while bearing the same and acquires new bondage of Karma. One should therefore avoid indulging in craving and aversion.

The people resorting to the absolute point of view conceive of the pure state of soul as existing forever. They believe that the soul cannot be stained or defiled, and its apparent impurity is illusory. They therefore conclude that nothing needs to be done to achieve the soul's purity. They remain content with the knowledge of inherent purity of soul and stand against making effort to manifest the same. Such people remain bare knowledgeable.

This stanza states that merely resorting to the absolute viewpoint is not helpful. One should keep the absolute state as the objective and try to manifest it by resorting to worship, devotion, right conduct, Self-study, etc. The ultimate state cannot arise without cultivating detachment and renouncement. For that purpose one needs to observe restraints, austerities, etc. Liberation can thus be attained by resorting to knowledge as well as practice. Any one of them to the exclusion of the other would not serve the purpose.

Nay Nishchay Ekäntathi, Ämän Nathi Kahel;
Ekänte Vyavahär Nahi, Banne Säth Rahel.

*Nothing has been stated here from one-sided absolute point of view or from one-sided practical point of view; both of them have been simultaneously kept in view. (1*32)

Explanation & Discussion:

What was implicitly said in the previous stanza is explicitly presented in this one. There are mainly two ways of looking at anything. One is the absolute viewpoint, which is known as Nishchay Naya. The other is the practical one, which is known as Vyavahär Naya. Both of them are equally important. The absolute viewpoint, without the practical one, would lead to illusion. It can generate fantasy and keep one self-complacent. There is thus the risk of falling downward by exclusively relying upon it.

Similarly resorting exclusively to the practical viewpoint is also fraught with danger. That can lead to a wild thicket of rituality. One is tempted to think that lifeless worship, observance of restraints and austerities, etc. would result in eradication of Karma. Thereby he expects to achieve the favorable situations. He is led to believe that the increasing

level of such observances would lead to an ever-increasing eradication of Karma, and thereby one can attain the Karmaless state.

Both these views are one-sided and they are not helpful in spiritual pursuit. One should remember that nothing can be achieved by mere knowledge or by mere physical activity. No activity, in absence of soul-orientation, can do any lasting good; nor does pure concept accomplish anything in absence of right practice. While it is necessary to know about the absolute state, it is also necessary to resort to the means for manifesting that state. One therefore needs to resort to both the viewpoints together. Resorting to any one of them, exclusive of the other, amounts to Ekänt that needs to be avoided. This Ätmasiddhi Shästra has been composed while simultaneously keeping in mind both these views.

Gachchhamatni Je Kalpanä, Te Nahi Sadvyavahär;
Bhän Nahi Nij Roopanun, Te Nishchay Nahi Sär.

The concepts based on sect or creed do not constitute the right practice; the view unrelated to the nature of Self does not lead to absolute truth. (133)

Explanation & Discussion:

There are different religions, and there are various sects & sub-sects in the same religion. People belonging to every religion and to the sects or sub-sects thereof insist that what they believe is right. It amounts to believing that truth would differ from religion to religion and creed to creed. Truth is, however, one and indivisible. Therefore it is said that all the enlightened persons have the same belief and they hold the same opinion. Hence what an enlightened person says should be accepted as truth, or that which accords with the nature of soul and leads to the path of liberation should be adopted as truth.

This may be acceptable in principle. But differences arise when it comes to the question of practice. Many sects and sub-sects arose by way of revolt against the established order. The people at the helm turned towards misusing their authority. The saintly people, who resented such misuse, therefore raised the flag of revolt and set up new standards of conduct. Unfortunately, the spirit behind those standards was lost with the passage of time. The lay followers, however, continued to stick to those standards without making out the implications thereof. That gave rise to the lifeless rituals prevalent within different sects and sub-sects. They are mechanically resorted to in the name of Vyavahär.

The essence of spiritual pursuit, however, lies in gaining equanimity; which can be done by cultivating detachment and by destruction or pacification of defilements. Only that Vyavahär should therefore be resorted to, which leads to detachment and to calming down of defilements.

Similarly the absolute concept is useful only to those, who have experienced the purity of soul. The illusory identification with the body is the root cause of the worldly life and that identification cannot stop simply by talking about the absolute nature of soul. Aside from realizing the nature of soul, the absolute viewpoint should be helpful in leading to right practice. Otherwise it would be meaningless.

As it stands at present, there is a lack of purpose in the so-called Vyavahär. Similarly there hardly appears any cognizable spiritual development among those holding the absolute point of view. The situation is thus unsatisfactory and there is scope for improvement on both sides.

Ägal Jnäni Thai Gayä, Vartamänmän Hoy;
Thäshe Käl Bhavishyamän, Märgabhed Nahi Koy.

There had been enlightened persons in the past, there are at present, there will be in the future; but their paths are not different in any way. (134)

Explanation & Discussion:

While discussing the last stanza it was pointed out that in view of the different beliefs prevailing in various sects and sub-sects, one should accept what the enlightened person says. In that connection, it is here said that enlightened persons arise in every period. We know from history that there were such personages in the past. There could be some at present, though we may not be aware of them. For instance, when Shrimad was alive in the 19th century, very few people knew that he was enlightened. Thus our unawareness does not mean that there cannot be such people now. The same way they are bound to arise in the future. All of them describe the same path. There is no difference in their approach. There is only one path of liberation. The objective is to be free from the continuing cycle of birth and death and the path for that purpose consists of the true insight and the endeavor to stay away from attachment and resentment.

Sarva Jiv Chhe Siddha Sam, Je Samaje Te Thäy;
Sadguruäjnä Jinadashä, Nimitta Käran Mäny.

All souls are like liberated ones; one who understands gets liberated. Precepts of true Guru and the state of omniscience are among the instrumental causes. (135)

Explanation & Discussion:

This is a very significant stanza, which describes the entire canon from the absolute as well as the practical view points. All souls have the same properties of perception, knowledge and bliss. From the absolute viewpoint there is therefore no difference between the liberated souls and the worldly ones. In reality, however, there is a difference. The liberated souls have manifested those properties, while the worldly ones have not. If one ignores or overlooks that reality, he will never be liberated. He, who knows the inherent attributes of soul and accepts the present reality, would definitely strive to manifest the inherent capabilities and attain liberation. The first line of the stanza therefore states that one who make out the reality can get liberated.

Every objective needs some means that become instrumental in achieving that objective. Such means are termed as Nimitta. Those means can be live or lifeless. For instance, a pot is made out of earth, while the potter, wheel, etc. are instrumental in making it. The second line of this stanza stipulates that the commandments of Guru and the state of the omniscient Lords are instrumental in attaining liberation. If therefore one wants to get liberated, he needs to carry out those commandments while keeping the state of the Lord as his objective.

The main commandment of a true Guru consists of calming down the defiling instincts. For that purpose one should remain meticulously vigilant while undertaking any activity. He should stay vigilant while moving, speaking, receiving what is needed, placing or displacing anything, and disposing of useless material. These are termed as five Samities. The state of the Lord symbolizes the steadiness of mind, speech, and body. These are known as three Gupties. These five Samities and three Gupties constitute the essence of Jain canon. They are collectively known as Ashtapravachanmätä, meaning the eightfold message of the omniscient Lord's sermon, which is as good as motherly affection.

Upädänanun Näm Lai, E Je Taje Nimitta;
Päme Nahi Siddhatvane, Rahe Bhräntimän Sthit.

One, who forsakes the instrumental factors in the name of absolute causation, would stay deluded and cannot attain the liberated state. (136)

Explanation & Discussion:

This stanza is also very significant as it presents the theory of causation in right perspective. Every thing occurs by virtue of several factors, which are termed as causes. All such factors can be classified in two categories of Upädän and Nimitta. Upädän is the absolute cause. It relates to the matter or the substance, which undergoes change and is therefore the cause of its own changing states. For instance, earth is the basic requirement for making an earthen pot; the pot cannot be made without the earth. If one tries to make it from sand or water, he cannot do it. This is because earth has the potential to be turned into a pot, while sand or water does not. Earth is therefore termed as Upädän or the absolute cause of the pot. The instrumental cause is termed as Nimitta, which has been explained above.

Thus the potential of something to turn into some other form or state is called its Upädän. The soul, because of its potential to attain the liberated state, is the Upädän for the state of liberation. Lifeless objects do not have that potential and do not therefore become Upädän for that purpose. Thus the potential to do something or to turn into some form is the essential aspect of Upädän. This should be kept in mind, because there prevails much misunderstanding about it.

Some people have the tendency to underrate the importance of Nimitta. They contend that Upädän is the only real cause; when something is going to happen, Nimitta is bound to be there. Actually both of them are equally essential. For instance, the earth may be lying somewhere for millions of years, but it does not turn into a pot, until some one picks it up, cultivates it by mixing it with water, and puts it on a turning wheel. Similarly in spite of the potential to attain liberation, the worldly souls have been wandering since infinity in absence of the right guidance and the vigor to put it into practice.

This stanza states that if one insists upon Upädän and forsakes Nimitta, he cannot attain liberation. By virtue of knowledge about the soul, one may think of the state of liberation to emerge out of the soul's nature and might even call for that state to emerge from within. But without heeding to and carrying out the commandments of Guru and without keeping the state of omniscience as his objective he cannot attain liberation. If someone therefore exclusively insists on Upädän and ignores Nimitta, he would merely stay bare knowledgeable. He is destined to remain under delusion, and would never attain liberation.

Mukhathi Jnän Kathe Ane, Antar Chhutyo Na Moh;
Te Pämar Präni Kare, Mätra Jnänino Droh.

He, who verbally talks of knowledge but who internally stays attached, is the miserable one, who merely betrays the enlightened ones. (137)

Explanation & Discussion:

The above stated position of the bare knowledgeable person is described here in a different perspective. Such a person has simply learnt about the blissful potential of soul, but has not done anything to manifest it. Had he realized that, his ego and attachment for worldly objects would have melted down. Instead of overcoming ego and attachment, the bare knowledgeable person would contend that attachment to worldly objects relates to the body and mind; soul has nothing to do with it. This displays his infatuation. He overlooks the fact that the lifeless body does not have any longing or desire; it is only by virtue of the soul's presence that the body acts in a particular way. By thinking and talking about enlightenment without overcoming attachment and infatuation one actually works against the concept of enlightenment.

Since such a person is likely to continue indulging in the wrong mode, it would create an adverse impression in the minds of others. They may also be led to think that his Guru might be like him. Thus his behavior becomes instrumental in casting aspersion on the Guru. Such a person thus happens to betray the image of the enlightened person.

Dayä, Shänti, Samatä, Kshamä, Satya, Tyäg, Vairägya;
Hoy Mumukshu Ghat Vishe, Eh Sadäy Sujägya.

Compassion, tranquility, equanimity, forgiveness, truth, renouncement, and detachment are ever-present at the heart of a liberation seeker. (138)

Explanation & Discussion:

The term Mumukshu literally means one who is desirous of liberation. Shrimad has defined the term (Vachanämrut # 254) as one who, being tired of all the sense of attachment and infatuation, endeavors only for liberation. He can be called a liberation seeker or even a truth seeker. This stanza describes the following seven attributes, which are essential for a liberation seeker.

Dayä: This means compassion. It is termed as the basis of religion, and denotes the softening of heart on seeing the pitiable conditions of others. A liberation seeker has thus compassion for self as well as for others. Such a person knows that indulgence in craving and aversion has caused the unending series of birth and death, and has subjected him to untold misery and pain. He would therefore try to avoid such indulgence

so as to avert the misery and pain. This is termed as self-compassion. Disaffection for the worldly wandering amounts to self-compassion.

One, who has self-compassion, is invariably compassionate to others. Realization of sufferings borne by him keeps him aware that if he causes pain to others, he will acquire unwholesome Karma that would again extend suffering to him. Not only does he therefore refrain from causing any suffering, but would also try to restrain others from causing the same. Out of compassion he would try to lead others towards the right path so that they can be free from suffering.

Shänti: This denotes peace. That concept is not restricted to silence or outward calmness. The emphasis is on internal peace, which arises when one feels tired of all worldly activities and stays as an unimpassioned spectator of whatever happens. Worry, diseases and concern (Ädhi, Vyädhi and Upädhi) are the three types of distress in the worldly life. By getting freed from all distress and affliction one can experience the peace and tranquility within.

Samatä: This means equanimity. It denotes staying objective in favorable as well as unfavorable situations. One equipped with equipoise is free from the sense of likes or dislikes and pleasure or pain. He stays above the sense of respect or disrespect and friends or foes; he maintains his equanimity in all circumstances.

Kshamä: This means forgiveness. If we perceive someone as not behaving to our expectations, we are prone to become angry. The attribute of Kshamä stipulates to forgive those who seem to be at fault. Lord Mahavir forgave even those, who caused him terrible pain and distress. Forgiving is a great virtue. It is closely related to the concept of Ahinsä (Non-violence). All possible emphasis is therefore laid on forgiveness.

Satya: This means truth, but it does not merely mean the verbal truth. Satya has a far wider connotation. It indicates everlastingness. Whatever lasts forever is truth. Since soul is everlasting, the conviction of soul is the real truth. In routine life too, unless one has such a conviction, he would tend to resort to lies for the sake of worldly benefits. But the person, who is convinced of the existence of soul, would remain scared of such indulgence. The true understanding of soul is therefore treated as supreme truth.

Tyäg: Literally this means giving up something, which can be external or internal. Renouncing the worldly objects is external Tyäg. Internally it

means giving up of craving, aversion and all other instincts, which are extraneous to soul. Once a person has grasped the truth, giving up of wrongs automatically comes forth.

Vairägya: This means detachment. It denotes absence of attachment and resentment. Renouncement and detachment are mostly used together and they seem to be alike. The difference between the two is that detachment is a state of mind, while renouncement indicates the physical giving up.

These seven attributes are interrelated and can be developed one after another starting with compassion. One, who has compassion at heart, tries to maintain peace of mind. Peace can lead to equanimity, and that can give rise to forgiveness. When all these attributes are in place, one can think of resorting to truth. In other words, he tries to remain tuned to soul. For staying that way one has to give up all those aspects that go against the well being of soul. If he cannot give up some of them, he at least develops detachment for them. These attributes help in maintaining Self-awareness, and are indicative of being a liberation seeker. If one does not hold them, he is evidently not a liberation seeker. It is therefore said here that they are always present at the heart of a truth seeker.

Mohbhäv Kshay Hoy Jyän, Athavä Hoy Prashänt;
Te Kahie Jnäni Dashä, Bäki Kahie Bhränt.

The state, where the sense of attachment is either eradicated or is calmed down, is called the enlightened one; all else is delusion. (139)

Explanation & Discussion:

Throughout the present discussion we had the occasions to talk about the enlightened person and the enlightenment gained by his grace. The characteristics of true Guru given in stanza 10 would be helpful in identifying an enlightened person, but how does one make out whether he himself has gained enlightenment? This stanza gives a yardstick for that purpose. It states that enlightenment arises only when delusion is overcome. As discussed earlier, enlightenment is inherent in soul, but it has been overshadowed by the impact of delusion. If that delusion is removed, enlightenment becomes manifest.

Whether it is perception-related or character-related, delusion can be overcome by the process of destruction or by pacification. In either of the cases, the deluding Karma ceases to be operative and the enlightenment shines out.

Enlightenment changes the entire outlook. In that light one clearly makes out the utter transitory nature of the worldly life. As such, the worldly objects no longer seem attractive to him. The absence of attachment for the worldly life is thus the sign of having overcome the delusion. Those, who think of the rise of enlightenment while being attached to the worldly aspects, merely delude themselves. Pitiable is the state of such deluded beings!

Sakal Jagat Te Enthvat, Athavä Swapna Samän;
Te Kahie Jnäni Dashä, Bäki Vächäjnän.

When the entire universe looks like left over (rejected) food or a dream, it is called the enlightened state; otherwise it is mere verbal knowledge. (140)

Explanation & Discussion:

This stanza gives other significant signs of enlightenment. To an enlightened person the entire universe seems like left over or rejected food. This concept can be better understood by analyzing the worldly phenomenon. It is now a scientific truth that the world consists of infinite atomic particles pervading everywhere. The physical bodies as well as everything else in the world are composed of such particles. The worldly souls adopt the particles at the time of body-formation and leave them at the time of death. Moreover, they also happen to adopt such particles in the form of Karma.

This process of adopting and leaving has been going on continually. During the infinite time that has elapsed, every particle in the world must have been adopted by each soul several times. As such, the entire world consists of the particles that have been adopted and released. Is that situation not comparable to the used or left over food?

To an enlightened person the entire universe therefore seems like the rejected food and is worthless. It is identical to the articles to be disposed off like vomited food. To take an illustration from routine life, if left over or vomited food is strewn over the dining table, who would like to occupy that place? To the enlightened persons every thing in the universe is comparable to that situation. On that very account when Rathnemi, brother of Lord Neminäth, displayed his attachment for Räjul, she brought him back to detachment by comparing his attachment to the vomited food.

As an alternative, the stanza states that the enlightened person looks at everything in the world as a dream. Quite a few fascinating objects or situations may appear in a dream and the dreamer may even

enjoy the same. But dreams are not true and they disappear at the instant of awaking. As the dreaming person wakes up, he realizes that he was simply availing of a dream; the fanciful situations visualized during the dream had no reality. Similarly all the worldly situations look ephemeral and unrealistic to the enlightened persons.

Identification and attachment that the worldly soul feels with the body and other environments is thus illusory and arises out of its ignorance and unawareness of the self. The enlightened person considers all the worldly situations dreamlike, and therefore does not attach importance to any of them. Since it is not possible to get the truth without overcoming the illusion, only those who set aside the illusion of the dreaming state can be considered enlightened. The so-called enlightened persons, who do not satisfy this criterion, are merely verbally knowledgeable.

Sthänak Pänch Vichärine, Chhatthe Varte Jeh;
Päme Sthänak Pänchmun, Emän Nahi Sandeh.

Pondering over the five stages (Fundamentals), if one acts as stated in the sixth,he would undoubtedly attain the fifth stage (State of liberation). (141)

Explanation & Discussion:

Of the six Fundamentals, the first five have to be properly understood and the last is meant for practicing. This stanza therefore states that if one truly understands the first five Fundamentals by contemplating over them, and then if he puts into practice what is stated in the sixth, he would surely attain liberation. In other words, if one is convinced of soul and its wandering, and proceeds on the path of liberation as stated in the sixth, he would reach the destination (liberation).

The Letter of Six Fundamentals (Appendix-II) states: "The enlightened persons have described the teaching of these Fundamentals for the sake of removing the sense of ego and attachment of the worldly soul. That sense arises from one's dreaming state, which has been prevailing since the time without beginning. If the soul realizes that its true nature is beyond that state, it would easily come out of it and gain right perception. By acquiring right perception, it would attain the liberation in the sense of realizing its true Self. Contemplation of these Fundamentals can thus lead it to experiencing its own natural purity, perfection, imperishability, and infinite bliss."

Since the concept of liberation has been dealt with in the fifth Fundamental, it is said in the stanza that those, who contemplate over the first five stages and practice as per sixth, would attain the fifth stage.

That reward is not promised to all those, who merely read or recite this text as it is said and believed by many. For getting the said reward it stipulates the condition of properly understanding and comprehending first five Fundamentals, and then earnestly practicing as per sixth Fundamental.

Deh Chhatän Jeni Dashä, Varte Dehätit;
Te Jnäninä Charanmän, Ho Vandan Aganit.

My innumerable obeisance be at the feet of the enlightened, who behaves transcendentally while being embodied. (142)

Explanation & Discussion:

At the time of commencing this composition the obeisance was offered to the enlightened Guru. That was done for securing his blessing for successfully carrying out the work. Since that work is now over, the obeisance is offered to all the enlightened personages, who stay beyond the physical mode while being embodied. Such personages are mainly the omniscient Lords, who abide in the transcendental state. Though it is hard to describe that state, one can try to comprehend it in terms of the ladder of spiritual elevation.

Jainism stipulates 14 stages of spiritual elevation, which are analogous to the rungs of a ladder. The ascendance on the ladder is mainly in the form of overcoming the deluding Karma. Since the time immemorial the worldly souls have been under delusion about the true nature of soul. They are conditioned to react to the different situations with craving or aversion. Thereby they acquire the bondage of Karma; and for bearing the consequences thereof, they continue to take births. That stage relates to the baseline of the ladder. It is the 1st stage known as Mithyätva.

The perception-related delusion is overcome in the 4th stage when one gains the right perception. As the aspirant goes ahead, the perception becomes clearer, and thereby the character-related delusion also continues to go down. This is concomitant to climbing on the succeeding rungs of the ladder. If the progress stays uninterrupted, one can reach the 8th stage, which is termed as unprecedented. Thereafter the progress in overcoming delusion is swift. It culminates in the 12th stage, when the character-related delusion is totally overcome. The rest of the defiling Karmas are destroyed at the end of that stage. The person thus attains omniscience and reaches the 13th stage.

That does not mean the end of embodiment, because one has to remain embodied till the end of that life. As such, the activities relating to

the embodiment continue to take place. The omniscient Lord, however, remains indifferent to such activities and stays transcendental. In this stanza the obeisance is offered to such transcendental personages. When the omniscient Lord comes to the end of that life, he gives up the body and gets liberated.

Here the question may arise, `The omniscient Lords have other significant attributes like infinite perception, infinite knowledge, infinite bliss, etc. Why are those attributes not called for while offering obeisance?' The reason is simple. This work has been composed mainly for those, who still have the sense of identification with the body. The purpose of this composition is to get them out of that sense. It is therefore necessary to bring to their notice the state of dissociation from the bodily instincts. Obeisance to the transcendental nature of the Lords can be helpful to them in contemplating over that state.

There can also be other persons (mainly those belonging to stages 4 to 7), who stay indifferent to the physical modes. Whether the body gets food or rest, whether it gets hurt or is afflicted by any disease is immaterial to them. They are self-realized and stay tuned to the true nature of soul. Since the sense of indifference prevails in their minds towards all bodily aspects, such persons can also be termed as living transcendentally. Shrimad belonged to that category. This stanza is meant to offer obeisance to such persons as well.

It should be noted that obeisance to the omniscient Lord is not to be offered once, twice, fifty times, or a hundred times. The word used here is Aganit, which means uncountable number of times. As such, obeisance is to be offered to the omniscient Lords and to the enlightened Guru every time so as to remain aware of their transcendental state.

Sädhan Siddha Dashä Ahin, Kahi Sarva Sankshep;
Shatdarshan Sankshepamän, Bhäkhyän Nirvikshep.

Herein has been succinctly described the state of liberation and its means; six schools of thought also have been explicitly stated in brief.

Ananya sharananä äpanär evä shri sadgurudevane atyant bhaktithi namaskär

Obeisance with intense devotion to the true Guide, the conferor of unique refuge.

Shuddha ätmaswaroopane pämyä chhe evä jnänipurushoe niche kahyän chhe te chha padane samyagdarshannä niväsanä sarvotkrust sthäanak kahyän chhe.

The enlightened persons, who have attained the true nature of Self, have termed the following six Fundamentals as the supreme abode of right perception.

Pratham pad:- 'Ätmä chhe.' Jem ghatpatädi padärtho chhe, tem ätmä pan chhe. Ämuk gun hoväne lidhe jem ghatpatädi hovänun pramän chhe, tem swaparprakäshak evi chaitnysattäno pratyaksh gun jene vishe chhe evo ätmä hovänun pramän chhe.

First Fundamental:- There is existence of soul. As there are physical objects like pot, cloth, etc. so is there the soul. As the properties of pot, cloth, etc. provide the evidence of their existence, the obvious property of consciousness to manifest the self as well as others is the evidence of the existence of soul.

Bijun pad:- 'Ätmä nitya chhe.' Ghatpatädi padärtho amuk kälvarti chhe. Ätmä trikälvarti chhe. Ghatpatädi sanyoge kari padärth chhe. Ätmä swabhäve karine padärth chhe; kemke teni utpati mate koi pan sanyogo anubhavyogya thatä nathi. Koi pan sanyogi dravyathi chetansattä pragat thavä yogya nathi mate anutpanna chhe; asanyogi hoväthi avinäshi chhe, kemke jeni koi sanyogathi utpati na hoy, teno koine vishe lay pan hoy nahin.

Second Fundamental:- Soul is eternal. Pot, cloth, etc. stay as such for a while; but soul stays forever. Pot, cloth, etc. are composed of some materials, but soul is a substance on its own, because no composition can be visualized for producing soul. Consciousness cannot arise out of any composition, so it is not a product. Being non-composite, it is imperishable; because what cannot be produced by any composition cannot even merge in anything else.

Trijun pad-: 'Ätmä kartä chhe.' Sarva padärtha arthakriyäsampanna chhe.Kain ne kain parinämkriyä sahit ja sarva padärtha jovämän äve chhe. Ätmä pan kriyäsampanna chhe. Kriyâsampanna chhe, mate kartä chhe. Te kartäpanun trividh shri jine vivechyun chhe; paramärthathi swabhävparinatie nijswaroopano kartä chhe. Anupachärit (Anubhavmän ävavä yogya, vishesh sambandh sahit)vyavahärathi te ätmä dravyakarmano kartä chhe. Upachärathi ghar, nagar ädino kartä chhe.

Third Fundamental:- Soul is Kartä. All objects are associated with noticeable activity; all of them are seen with some or other alteration in their states. Soul also is imbibed with activity. Being imbibed with activity, it is Kartä. The omniscient Lords have specified three types of such activities. In absolute state when soul stays tuned to its nature, it is Kartä of that nature; in usual practice (which can be experienced; which comes in close

contact), it is Kartä of material Karma and nominally it is Kartä of building, town etc.

Chothun pad-: 'Ätmä bhoktä chhe.' Je je kain kriyä chhe te te sarva safal chhe, nirarthak nathi. Je kaii pan karvämän äve tenun fal bhogavavämän äve evo pratyaksha anubhav chhe. Vish khädhäthi vishanun fal; säkar khäväthi säkarnun fal; agnisparshathi te agnisparshanun fal; himne sparsh karaväthi himsparshanun jem fal thayä vinä rahetun nathi, tem kashäyädi ke akashäyädi je kain parinäme ätmä pravarte tenun fal pan thavä yogya ja chhe, ane te thäy chhe. Te kriyäno ätmä kartä hoväthi bhoktä chhe.

Fourth Fundamental:- Soul bears the consequences. All the activities are fruitful; they are not futile. It is the obvious experience that whatever is done, the consequences follow. Consumption of poison or sugar and contact with fire or snow do not fail to extend the consequences. Similarly, if the soul indulges in defiled or undefiled state, such indulgence is bound to be fruitful and it brings forth the consequences. Thus soul being Kartä of that Karma, it bears the consequences.

Pänchamun pad:- 'Mokshapad chhe.' Je anupachärit vyavahärathi jivne karmanun kartäpanun nirupan karyun, kartäpanun hoväthi bhoktäpanun nirupan karyun, te karmanun talaväpanun pan chhe; kem ke pratyaksh kashäyädinun tivrapanun hoy pan tenä anabhyästhi, tenä aparichaythi, tene upasham karaväthi, tenun mandpanun dekhäy chhe, te kshin thavä yogya dekhäy chhe, kshin thai shake chhe. Te te bandhbhäv kshin thai shakavä yogya hoväthi tethi rahit evo je shuddha ätmaswabhäv te roop mokshapad chhe.

Fifth Fundamental:- There is liberation. Soul has been described above as being Kartä of material Karma and hence subject to its consequences. That Karma can be terminated as well; because even if the prevailing defilements etc. are very acute, they can be reduced by discontinuance of practice, by avoiding contact and by calming them down. They are reducible and can be destroyed. The state of the bondage thus being destructible, the pure state of soul, devoid of the bondage, is the state of liberation.

Chhatthun pad:- 'Te mokshano upäy chhe.' Jo kadi karmabandh mätra thayä kare em ja hoy, to teni nivrutti koi käle sambhave nahin. Pan karmabandhthi viparit swabhävvälän evä jnän, darshan, samädhi, vairägya bhaktyädi sädhan pratyaksha chhe; je sädhnananä bale karmabandh shithil thäy chhe, upasham päme chhe, kshin thäy chhe. Mäte te jnän, darshan, sanyamädi moskshapadanä upäy chhe.

Sixth Fundamental:- There are means to attain the liberation. If the bondage of Karma continues to occur, its cessation can never be possible. There are, however, evident means, such as knowledge, conviction, quietude, detachment, devotion etc. which are manifestly opposites of the bondage of Karma. With the intensity of those means the bondage is loosened; it subsides and can be destroyed. As such, knowledge, perception, restraint etc. are the means for attaining liberation.

Shri jnänipurushoe samyagdarshananä mukhya niäväsbhoot kahyän evä ä chha pad atre sankshepmän janävyän chhe. Samipmuktigämi jivne sahaj vichärmän te sapramän thavä

yogya chhe, param nishchayroop janävä yogya chhe, teno sarva vibhäge vistär thai tenä ätmämän vivek thavä yogya chhe. Ä chha pad atyant sadehrahit chhe em parampurushe nirupan karyun chhe. E chha padno vivek jivne swaswaroop samajväne arthe kahyo chhe.

These six Fundamentals, termed by the enlightened persons as the primary abode of right perception, have been given here in brief. The soul, which is close to liberation, would easily find them in right proportion; he would feel the same totally convincing. Consideration of these Fundamentals in all perspectives would lead to rise of discernment within. The supreme Lord has pronounced these six fundamentals as beyond doubt. Discernment resulting from these six Fundamentals can lead the soul to realize its own true nature.

Anädi sweapnadashäne lidhe utpanna thaelo jivno ahambhäv, mamatvabhäv te nivrutta thaväne arthe ä chha padni jnänipurushoe deshanä prakäshi chhe Te swapnadashäthi rahit mätra potänun swaroop chhe, em jo jiv parinäm kare, to sahaj mätramän te jägrut thai samyagdarshanne präpta thäy; samygdarshanne präpta thai swaswabhäroop mokshane päme. Koi vinäshi, ashuddha ane anya evä bhävne vishe tene harsha, shok, sanyog utpanna na thäy. Te vichäre swaswaroopne vishe ja shuddhapanun, sampoornapanun, avinäshipanun, atyant änandpanun antarrahit tenä anubhavmän äve chhe.

The enlightened persons have provided the instructions of these six Fundamentals in order to remove the soul’s ego and the sense of belonging arising from its dreaming state prevailing since the time without beginning. If the soul conceives of its true nature as being beyond the dreaming state, it would wake up at ease and gain the right perception. With the gain of right perception, it would attain liberation in the sense of realizing the true Self. Sense of exultation, grief or other interaction would not occur to it from any perishable, impure or such other mode. That contemplation would lead it to experience, from close proximity, its own natural purity, perfection, imperishability and boundless pleasure.

Sarva vibhävparyäymän mätra potäne adhyäsni aikyatä thai chhe, tethi keval potanun bhinnapanun ja chhe em spashta, pratyaksha, atyant pratyaksha, aparoksh tene anubhav thäy chhe. Vinäshi athavä anya padärthanä sanyogne vishe tene ishta-anishtapanun präpta thatun nathi. Janma, jarä, maran, rogädi bädharahit sampoorna mähätmyanun thekänun evun nijswaroop jani, vedi te krutärtha thäy chhe. Je je purushone e chha pad sapramän evän param purushanän vachne ätmäno nishchay thayo, te te purusho sarva swaroopne pämyä chhe; ädhi, vyädhi, upädhi, sarva sangathi rahit thayä chhe, thäy chhe; ane bhävikälmä tem ja thashe.

The worldly soul has been identifying itself with the states arising from wrong perception. It would now gain clear, visible, vivid and manifest experience of being totally distinct from such states. The interaction with the perishable or such other objects would not be perceived by it as desirable or undesirable. It would feel gratified by knowing and experiencing its own true Self as being the abode of perfect greatness, free

from the afflictions of birth, old age, death, disease etc. All those, who are convinced of the soul by the words of enlightened persons in the form of these six Fundamentals, have realized their true state. In the past they have been freed from worries, disease, afflictions and all other interactions; they presently do so and the same will happen in future.

Je satpurushoe janma, jarä, maranano näsh karavävälo swaswaroopamä sahaj avasthän thaväno upadesh kahyo chhe, te satpurushone atyant bhaktithi namskär chhe. Teni nishkäran karunäne nitya pratye nirantar stavavämän pan ätmaswabhnäv pragate chhe, evä sarva satpurusho, tenä charanärvind sadäy hradayane vishe sthäpan raho!

Let our highly devoted obeisance be to the enlightened persons, who have instructed to abide at ease within the true self, which can forever end the affliction of birth, old age and death. The true nature of soul can arise by daily and continuous adoration of their innate compassion. The lotus-like feet of all such persons may always stay at our hearts.

Je chha padthi siddha chhe evun ätmaswaroop te jenä vachanane angikär karye sahajamä pragate chhe, je ätmaswaroop pragatwäthi sarvakäl jiv sampoorna änandne präpta thai nirbhay thäy chhe, te vachananä kahenär evä satpurushanä gunani vyäkhyä karwäne ashakti chhe, kem ke jeno pratyupakär na thai shake evo paramätmabhäv te jäne kain pan ichchhyä vinä mätra nishkäran karunäshiltäthi äpyo, em chhatän pan jene anya jivane vishe ä märo shishya chhe, athavä bhaktino kartä chhe mate märo chhe, em kadi joyun nathi, evä je satpurush tene atyant bhaktie fari fari namaskär ho!

It is not possible to define the attributes of the enlightened persons, the adoption of whose instructions can easily lead to the manifestation of true Self as evidenced by these six Fundamentals. By virtue of such manifestation the soul attains the everlasting bliss and gains fearlessness. The enlightened persons have conferred the unrewardable supreme disposition, without desiring anything whatsoever, by virtue of their innate compassion; yet they have never even conceived of so and so being my pupil or of being mine because he is my devotee. Repeated obeisance with intense devotion to such enlightened persons.

Je satpurushoe sadguruni bhakti nirupan kari chhe, te bhakti mätra shishyanä kaltänane arthe kahi chhe. Je bhaktine präpta thaväthi sadgurunä ätmäni cheshtäne vishe vrutti rahe, apoorva gun drashtigochar thai anya swachchhand mate, ane saheje ätmabodh thäy em jänine je bhaktinun nirupam karyun chhe, te bhaktine ane te satpurushne fari fari trikäl namaskär ho!

The enlightened persons have urged for devotion to the true Guide solely for the benefit of pupils. They have done it so that the tendency of the pupil may stay towards the state of Guru's soul; self indulgence may come to the end on witnessing their unprecedented attributes and self-realization may occur at ease. Repeated and all-time obeisance to that devotion and to those enlightened persons.

Jo kadi pragatpane vartamänmän kevaljnänani utpati thai nathi, pan jenä vachananä vichäryoge shaktipane kevaljnän chhe em spashta jänyun chhe, shraddhäpane kevaljnän

thayun chhe, vichärdashäe kevaljnän thayun chhe, ichchhädashäe kevaljnän thayun chhe, mukhya naynä hetuthi kevaljnän varte chhe, te kevaljnän sarva avyäbädh sukhanun pragat karnär, jenä yoge sahaj mätramän jiv pämvä yogya thayo, te satpurushanä upkärne sarvotkrusht bhaktie namskär ho! Namskär ho1

Omniscience has, of course, not been presently manifested. It has, however, been clearly known as a potentiality by virtue of the words of enlightened ones. Omniscience exists as a matter of faith, as a state to be contemplated over and as a state to be aspired for; from the absolute point of view it has been prevailing at present. Repeated obeisance with supreme devotion be to the benevolence of the enlightened person by whose grace this soul easily became worthy of attaining omniscience, the manifestation of unobstructed bliss.